Pavel Gurevich

HUMANISM: TRADITIONS AND PARADOXES

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Novosti Press Agency Publishing House
Moscow
1989

0302030700
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The bus reached a fork in the road and headed towards the mountain pass. A stony desert stretched out around us, with outlines of rocky chains in the distance. The monotonous wormwood steppe would occasionally be enlivened by some yellow shrubs. Then the road began to climb, and it became increasingly difficult to breathe. On rounding a bend, the crags suddenly disappeared, as if dispelled by some magic force, opening a magnificent view onto the famous Lake Issyk-Kul, one of nature's finest creations.

Today, the name of Issyk-Kul evokes response far beyond the confines of Soviet Kirghizia—a small Central Asian republic situated on the slopes of the Tien Shan mountains.

By invitation from the prominent Soviet author Chinghiz Aitmatov, visitors from all over the world arrived there in October 1986 to take part in the Issyk-Kul Forum. These were: Turkish writer Yashar Kemal, President of India's National Academy of

Music, Dance and Drama Narayana Menon, Cuban prose writer Lisandro Otero, President of the Club of Rome Alexander King, American playwright Arthur Miller, with his wife artist Inga Miller, Turkish composer Ömer Livanelli, American prose writer James Baldwin, French writer Claude Simon, Spanish public activist and writer Federico Mayor, member of the UNESCO Secretariat Augusto Forti, American futurologist Alvin Toffler and his wife philosopher Heidi Toffler, British writer, actor and film director Peter Ustinov, Ethiopian artist Afework Tekle, American actor David Baldwin.

The Forum's participants spent several days in Kirghizia. The General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Mikhail Gorbachev took part in the discussion. The discussion covered topics which related in one way or another to the problem of the purpose and place of eternal values and ideals in the cultural and spiritual evolution of mankind, and of how to preserve and expand them. The pristine beauty of the mountain scapes tuned one to thinking about the eternal and topical problems of human existence.

On one occasion, the conversation focused on the difference of opinion concerning mankind's path to survival. Some participants pointed to a spiritual renovation of the world as the key to survival; others emphasized the need to transform and perfect human nature; still others called for a revival of archaic traditions and mores. Someone intervened by wondering whether the prescriptions for survival were of any use, since man, possibly the only intelligent inhabitant of the Universe, could perish in a nuclear holocaust.

Peter Ustinov was categorical:

"I don't think that humanism can be many-faced. It's like love... It's either there, or it is not.

Meanwhile, we are sometimes offered models of 'philanthropy' which smell strongly of misanthropy."

"But love is multifarious," said Narayana Menon. "Being a writer and a film director, you, Peter, must be perfectly aware of that."

"Oh yes, I agree. But let me give you a historical example. In 1945, when President Truman was in Potsdam, Germany, he received a coded cable. The men in charge of the Manhattan Project were informing him about the successful testing of the atomic bomb. Very soon, the old people, women and children of Hiroshima and Nagasaki felt the lethal impact of America's 'pacifying hand'. It was those people and not Japan's ruling clique that fell victim to the 'retaliation' for crimes they never committed. Crying injustice is often done in the name of love for mankind."

"But this can't devalue the very notions of 'justice' and 'humanism'."

"That's right. But there's something that keeps worrying me. When I think that 200 million children worldwide are forced to work... Or, else, that over one million Mexican teenagers go hunting for seasonal jobs in the United States every year... Can it really be recompensed by humanistic rhetoric? What I think we need is action and not declarations. Humanism should be cleansed of banalities, indifference and hypocrisy."

There is a good deal of reason in Peter Ustinov's polemic stance. It is true, that while talking of Man we often use abstract and lofty tones. We extoll Man as the unique and immune governor of Nature, as an incarnation of spirit and as a focus of righteousness. A supreme value...

Yet the most essential thing is missing in such revelations, in this unrestrained idealization—*the problem*. Of course, it would be easy to add new, lofty

paragraphs to the world humanism charter. The question would remain, however, as to whether humanism is backed by a realistic programme of action. The question is whether Man has enough intelligence to confirm his grand destiny.

Humanism is a single entity when it comes to human values. But, to contradict Peter Ustinov's statement, humanism also exists in a great variety of versions and forms; love for man in itself allows for a great diversity of nuances. And it is in no way the result of ideological self-will. Humanism, as a specific system of beliefs and standards, has a long history. It has, naturally, absorbed the historically predetermined approaches to the problem, as well as the concrete and often divergent views on various human values.

The diverse notion of humanism is also a token of our times. Alongside the traditional versions, new ones emerge, which often shatter the established standards. At the same time, there is a clearly felt tendency for combining the humanistic standpoints, for working out, as it were, a universal, a global humanism.

It seems obvious that without man, a corporeal individual possessing intellect and senses, humanitarianism is deprived of its basis. There are, nonetheless, some theoreticians, who maintain that it is possible to construct some incorporeal being, which will symbolize Reason...

In correlating the notion of humanitarianism solely with a natural individual, a son of the Earth, let us not forget, that he does not live in isolation; it is his social bonds alone that serve as a measure for humanism, and define its nature and purposes. It is not without reason that a particular culture reflects specific values and ideals. It is not simply by proclaiming humanistic paragons, but also by trying to translate

them into life, that a society demonstrates the degree of its maturity.

So, let's take Man. Man and society. And these days, there is an increasingly acute feeling of each individual being a particle of mankind as a whole.

Today's world is made of many cultures and civilizations. Humanism, however, is not a regional concept. It reflects the values of the entire human race. That is why the historical paths of mankind and those of humanism are inseparable.

What is man?

What stands behind the man-society relationship?

Why does humanism represent mankind's universal consciousness?

"I COUNT NOTHING HUMAN INDIFFERENT TO ME"

It is the summer of 1983. I am attending a session of the 17th World Philosophical Congress in Montreal. I have two judgements concerning man written down on pieces of paper. I hand them over to my Canadian opponent William Dray.

Here is the first one: "...il est une grande gloire adorable, image miraculeuse de la vie organique, sainte merveille de la forme et de la beauté, et l'amour pour lui, pour le corps humain, c'est de même un intérêt extrêmement humanitaire et une puissance plus éducative que toute la pédagogie du monde! Oh, enchantante beauté organique qui ne se compose ni de teinture à l'huile ni de pierre, mais de matière vivante et corruptible, pleine du secret fébrile de la vie et de la pourriture!" (it is the love for this great, adorable radiance, this miraculous image of organic life, this divine expression of form and beauty, the human body, that conveys an extraordinary humanitarian interest, and provides far greater educational opportunities than all the ped-

agogy in the world! Oh, the enchanting organic beauty, created not with paint or stone, but with living and corruptible matter, full of the secrets of life and decay).

And here is just the opposite: a conviction that man possesses a peculiar kind of "phylogenetic schizophrenia". This is an inborn mental disorder characterized by a difficulty in coordinating the emotional and the analytical capabilities of the brain, and is a result of the pathological evolution of the nervous system of primates, which culminated precisely in the emergence of *homo sapiens*...

Where do these two such diverse statements come from? The first one comes from a character created by the great German thinker Thomas Mann, and the other from an English scholar Arthur Koestler. The latter considered himself a Marxist at the beginning of his scientific career, but later turned to irrationalist concepts, which denied even the faintest hint of the harmonized integrity of man as a biological being. How can this extreme polarity of views be explained? Perhaps these are two incompatible ways of perceiving the Universe—one poetic and one sceptical and analytical? The writer overflows with admiration, and the philosopher displays a sober precision? No. In addition to being a philosopher, Koestler was also an author and journalist.

There are only a few decades separating Thomas Mann and Arthur Koestler. There is, however, an abyss between the two men: the total defamation of man, the myth about his "utter destitution", absolute inferiority and sense of doom.

...We continue the discussion in the corridor, whose walls are hung with a long succession of portraits of famous thinkers and philosophers, both ancient and modern. Quite possibly it is this gallery that compels us to refer to different epochs and to

diverse conclusions. The polarity of views on the nature of man can be found in history. Even the earliest myths known to us describe man as inalienable from the Universe. Man is a fragment of the Universe, or, to be more precise, some kind of an imitation, an effigy of "the cosmos". The sturdiness of this notion has been well illustrated in the works by our contemporary philologist and philosopher Alexei Losev, whose name is also well known to Western science. According to him, the difference here is a purely quantitative one: what is specific to the cosmos is specific to man, and vice versa: what is specific to man is specific to the cosmos. There is no disunion, no abyss between the cosmos and man. To this we must add that the ancient Greeks simply did not possess the sense of *personality*, nor did the majority of the ancient Oriental peoples.

Isn't that an exaggeration? Could a people who attained such a high degree of culture, be totally lacking the "sense of personality"? Let's put it this way: the sense was there, but in a very particular form. According to ancient notions, the future of any human being, and even his behaviour, is predetermined by fate. In other words, man's free will merely follows his predestined "course".

Nonetheless, although aware of what lay in store for them, the principal characters of ancient Greek mythology such as Achilles, Hercules and Prometheus, still acted according to their own free will! Isn't that remarkable? Predestination does not rule out freedom of choice; Fate allows an alternative for heroic deeds.

With the emergence of Christianity in the centuries that followed, the concept of man underwent a fundamental change. The purpose of human life was altered, for there was now within man the "creative" spirit of God, which expressed itself through his or

her nature. Every person acquired a certain self-value, no longer related to cosmological subjects. There emerges an idealized conception of man, as of a corporeal being, animated by the power of reason and spirituality.

The Hellenist culture is known to have created the cult of man's natural essence, through admiration of this outstanding creation of nature. Even the gods in the ancient Greek myths took on a human appearance. Any adornment of an individual's natural appearance was considered impermissible. Nevertheless, the worship of some generalized, "unshattered" ideal of the human body prevented ancient philosophy from conceiving the idea of personality in its specific form, as it occurred in Christianity.

Yes, it was Christianity that in some ways discredited the human flesh and gave birth to the idea of its "ungodliness". A contradiction, however, arises: Christianity, which debases man as a corporeal being wrapped in evil, nonetheless asserts that man was created *in the image and after the likeness of God.* This permits us to conclude, that although Christianity exposed the ungodliness of the flesh, it never placed the goodness of man's actual biological nature under any doubt.

This is the reason why in my argument with William Dray I maintained:

"According to Christianity, God incarnated man in a well-made bodily form. But man gave way to the temptations of the flesh. That's his own wrongdoing—it has nothing to do with intrinsic "defects" in his creation.

It is a viewpoint my opponent would not accept.

What makes me argue? Why am I trying to convey to him this view on Christianity as a specific cultural tradition, the view maintained by Soviet scholars? I am doing so because it was Christianity that gave rise

to the concept of *European Personalism*, in which human personality is treated as an Absolute. Meanwhile, the essence of the latest anthropological versions of man's "depravity" boils down to discrediting his biological origin. Their principal thesis is that human life is purposeless, since man, himself, is an error of evolution. The paradox, as we can see, lies in the fact that this conclusion has today been arrived at by scientists, not by theologians.

Furthermore, ancient thinkers placed a high value on human personality. Thus Plato, for example, formulated the idea of a harmonized cultivation of human merits. Contrary to the Hellenist culture, the philosophy of the Middle Ages did everything possible to prove the viciousness and bodily perversity of man. When we look at stained glass windows and sculptures dating back to those times, we get the impression that the human race had degenerated and its blood was running cold. Saints suffering from consumption, ugly martyrs, flat-chested maidens...

At the same time I don't share the traditional view that the Middle Ages were a period of social stagnation. I quite agree with those scholars who maintain just the opposite. Besides, apart from Christianity, quite a few Oriental religions despise "corporeality".

It goes without saying, that there were many differences in this regard between the East and Europe. Oriental teachings denied the value of individual; they showed no trace of the idea of human independence or subjectivity. The depersonalized character of the Oriental despotism was dissolved in the vastness of space.

The long-established European tradition is a different matter: man is regarded as an indisputable treasure. One could say that this idea lay at the end

of via dolorosa that had to be travelled by the entire history of Western humanistic philosophy. It was born of the struggle against alien, non-European mentalities, as well as against all kinds of discredit that sprouted on the indigenous, Western soil. Moreover, it is the European mind that is marked for anthropocentrism, i.e. the view that man is the centre and the supreme goal of the Universe.

What is man? What is his nature, his essence? What does the purpose and the value of human life depend upon? What are the fundamental problems of human existence? These questions have long tormented European thinkers. There is a variety of different answers. Nonetheless, I think this multitude of views can be classified in some way. I will attempt to do this by putting them into three general categories. These are: *stoicism, hedonism* and *theology*. Each of them provides its own specific view on man, his nature and on the purpose of human life. Founded at the dawn of civilization, they have all survived to this day, though, naturally, in a modified form.

Let's start with stoicism. The ancient Stoics told their disciples that human life was dramatic, often with a note of fatalism running through it. In confronting Fate, man can only count on himself; even in the most hopeless situations, such as in the face of imminent disaster, catastrophe, destitution or death, his lot is to show courage, impassivity, to exalt his own will above all things. Only that can make him hold out against misfortune. But when it is no longer possible to "live and act", stoically enduring suffering, suicide, the intentional taking of one's own life, is justified.

The philosophical principles of stoicism were sharply contrasted by the Greek philosopher Epicurus' view that pleasure was the chief good

(hēdonē). The Epicureans held that man should seek contentment not in the serenity of the soul, but in the "aversion of pain". The theory implies that to indulge in pleasure is the road to happiness and self-sufficiency. But how can man enjoy life when it is clouded by the imminence of death? The Epicurean creed discards this query. It holds that so long as we are here, death has not yet come; and when it does come, we will no longer be here. The craving for existence is the sole indisputable value in which "man" and "God" seem to merge together: the divine can only be felt in experiencing pleasure.

The third category is theological. It proceeds from the premise that man's predestination lies beyond his earthly existence, such as it is. Hence the Christian doctrines of Atonement in the Reign of God, of heaven and hell. The Christian believer is thus supposed to accept his earthly life as a prologue to another life, the principal one. It follows from the above, that man's predestination has nothing to do with his earthly pursuits.

Neither the Epicurean creed, nor stoicism, or even less so the Christian outlook represent random views on the individual. In his work *Difference Between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature*, the young Karl Marx wrote: "Is not their essence so full of character, so intense and eternal that the modern world itself has to admit them to full spiritual citizenship?"[1] In replying to this question I would reiterate that the values created within the three aforementioned categories continue to form part of today's spiritual quest.

The personalistic trend in European culture manifested itself most blatantly in the spiritual adolescence of the Renaissance. It was at that time that

[1] K. Marx, F. Engels, *Coll. Works*, London, 1975, Vol. 1, p. 35.

humanism took shape as an independent ideological trend. The ideologists of the Renaissance, who can justly be referred to as spiritual titans, substituted the individual for the abstractions and the ideals of the earlier age. They professed the freedom of the individual, being vigorously opposed to religious asceticism and advocating man's right to earthly delights. Those views filtered into science and religion. The humanists were confident that human beauty was consonant with divine beauty.

The humanism of Recent and Modern History freed European culture's personalistic trend of its religious content. It began to recognize man's right to freedom, happiness, dignified spiritual and physical existence, regardless of any religious postulates. In the centuries that followed, these views evolved into the concepts and ideals of *individualism*, as a specific ethical doctrine having primary regard for the individual.

Such notions as "individual", "personality", "man", had at all times been indications of historical progress, whether marking the period of change from the Stone Age to civilization, from ancient times to the Middle Ages, or from the medieval to the modern world—at the time of the Renaissance—because the natural essence of man was not contrasted with his spiritual entity. This certainly served to enhance the humanistic tradition.

Characterizing the humanism of the Renaissance, Frederick Engels wrote: "It was the greatest progressive revolution that mankind had so far experienced, a time which called for giants and produced giants—giants in power of thought, passion and character, in universality and learning."[1] But

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[1] K. Marx, F. Engels, *Coll. Works*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1987, Vol. 25, p. 319.

even the most outstanding figures of those times felt that harmony should exist between man and society.

The Renaissance virtually urged that individualism be replaced with the historically evolving collectivism—by no means an impersonal community, but one whose strength would lie in its diversity, in the individuality of its members. Marx and Engels were later to write: "If man is shaped by environment, his environment must be made human. If man is social by nature, he will develop his true nature only in society, and the power of his nature must be measured not by the power of the separate individual but by the power of society."[1]

It is not without reason that from the time of the Renaissance the idea of anthropocentrism began to be increasingly focused on man's creative capabilities; the development of science was used by humanism to glorify the expansionism of man, his readiness to shatter the aura of divinity inherent in nature. These views were later on reflected in the humanism of post-Renaissance history.

When William Dray and I spontaneously delved into various epochs of European history, we had one and the same purpose: to understand why, preceded by such a long evolution of humanism in the European mind, there emerged a pessimistic attitude towards man as a natural being, a notion of his biological and intellectual inferiority. What caused this reversal?

When ancients said "I am a man, I count nothing human indifferent to me", they implied emotions and desires, secret intentions and spiritual weakness... We are becoming increasingly aware today that the boundaries of what is meant by "human" are much more fluid. We still do not fully understand what

[1] *Ibid.*, 1975, Vol. 4, p. 131.

man's natural predestination is. What is his mission? To uncover the mysteries of matter? To reshape the world? We have a vague feeling, however, that there is in man something fragile, not fully harmonious or controllable, which makes him far more interesting and significant than, say, a perfectly-designed machine.

Pondering about nature, Fyodor Tyutchev, a 19th century Russian poet, described it as a Sphinx. He attempted to solve its tempting riddle. Then a doubt stroke him: What if there were no riddle at all? We are trying to solve the riddle of man. To figure up, to classify and to comprehend. But man is not the acme of creation, and neither is the world around him... The formative capabilities of man, the power of his thought and spirit are in perpetual motion. Only history in its non-stop progress is capable of unveiling the secrets of the sophisticated interrelationships that exist between Man and Nature, Nature and Man.

It was from this angle that the problem of humanism was viewed by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels.

REAL HUMANISM

I recall yet another dialogue. This time with John Passmore, a prominent Australian philosopher.

"Why do you Marxists try to understand all the problems of the century by turning to Marx? I agree he was a great thinker. But he lived a century ago."

"So what?"

"What I mean is that the Victorian Age has long sunk into oblivion. Could Marx foresee the catastrophic destruction of nature, or the nuclear threat?... Yet out of habit, you don't reason independently, but always in the name of some flawless teaching."

"Well, zealousness for learning does not entail abandoning one's own views. You said that Marx knew nothing about the future ecological catastrophe, but it was he who drew public attention to the degeneration of the Earth, to the threat posed by the disastrous depletion of soils. He wrote with regard to this: '...cultivation when it progresses spontaneously and is not *consciously controlled*... leaves deserts behind it'."

"I don't doubt that Marx made quite a few prophetic statements. The question is: Is it appropriate to seek a forecast of modern problems from a contemporary of Victorian culture?"

"Do you know that one of our contemporary colleagues said that European philosophy knows only one thinker—Socrates. The rest are just commentators of his ideas. One may seek the answers to today's problems not only from the Victorian Age, but from Socrates as well. Anyway, the very fact of the evolution of European philosophy shows that we are continuing to comment on his ideas, doesn't it?"

"In this case, permit me to express my dissatisfaction in a more precise way. We Western philosophers argue a great deal about human issues and humanism. We have, however, no rigid axioms. Our system of thought is flexible. It is always developing, always dynamic. What do you have? Can you put in doubt albeit a single statement by Marx? To you it is a catechism."

Passmore's words made me wonder. Marx and a collection of dogmas... Could anything be more absurd? In the first place, Marx himself was a multifarious thinker, considering the trains of thought which led him to true knowledge. Frequently, even experts claim that he contradicted himself. This is because for years, Marx was recognized by the majority of European intellectuals solely as the author

of *Das Kapital*. One has to be aware, however, that in this gigantic work he was studying the capitalist mode of production. Where others confined themselves to certifying the impotence of man in the face of alien external forces, Marx discovered *objective historical laws*. He depicted man as a product of specific social conditions against a grandiose background panorama of social dynamics.

But when Marx's early works were made available to the European readers, quite a few preconceptions about this thinker were shattered. They found out that Marx was not a prophet of impersonal forces and mechanisms. On the contrary, he had contributed to the anthropological theory, and more than that, it was in man that he saw an immense and inexhaustible history-making potential. It was then that the Western image of Marx diverged into "Marx, the humanist" and "Marx, the political scientist". This issue has since been the subject of heated discussions at various philosophical forums.

Let us investigate whether Marx indeed backtracked on his own original views. Is it true that having initially voiced a humanistic stand, he later showed indifference to the destiny and mystery of man? I take a book from my book-case. It contains term papers by graduates of the Trier Gymnasium, which Marx attended. These essays offer no theoretical revelations. While re-reading the book, I attempt to trace Marx's evolution into a genius, to understand the roots of his future philosophical contemplations. What is the purpose of life? It was this question that worried young Marx and his schoolmates.

Admittedly, an essay written long ago by a schoolboy cannot help me today in finding answers to tormenting questions. Nonetheless, it gives an idea of how Marx's humanistic thought matured. He writes that the difference between a human being and an

animal lies in man's ability to choose his aims consciously and to strive for their realization. Marx the teenager associates the purpose of his life and his happiness with working for the welfare of mankind.

I can visualize a sour smile creasing Passmore's face upon reading these lines. He would probably say that this was exactly how they write the lives of the Saints. But do not a young man's dreams reveal his personality? Marx's poems, collected in the *Book of Love*, strike a romantic note. The young poet dwells upon the infinity of human strivings, upon the boundlessness of his own feelings:

> "Drank I all the stars' bright radiance,
> All the light by suns o'erspilled,
> Still my paints would want for recompense,
> And my dreams be unfulfilled."[1]

In the 1830s, the young Marx disassociated himself from the Romantic outlook. Following Byron, Shelley and Pushkin, he abandoned the *Weltschmerz*—the mood of sentimental sadness, and glorified rather than the human personality, the vigorous human self opposed to injustice, evil and humiliation, the "romantic God" and the "universal soul" of man.

In his poem *Human Pride*, and in the drafts of his doctoral thesis, Marx turns to the myth of Prometheus. He extolls the ancient god benefector of mankind as the worthiest of Saints and a martyr, as a humanist hero; not a destroyer, but a reformer of the world. Prometheus rebelled against the despotism of Zeus in the name of humaneness.

The young Marx elevates man and human dignity, and in so doing he rejects the divine motivation of human actions and desires. The supreme divinity is within man, in his moral consciousness. Marx's youth-

[1] K. Marx, F. Engels, *Coll Works*, London, 1975, Vol. 1, p. 523.

ful ardour centres on a vigorous and god-like man with an unquenchable love for humanity. In the years that followed, Marx never lost his faith in the Prometheus-type personality, in the altruistic hero.

So much for Marx's youthful ideals—we shall come back to them later on. Let us turn to his philosophy of man, and trace its development through his theoretical works. What new ideas did he contribute to this issue? Why do we and our like-thinkers still accept Marx's concept of humanism as a living and dynamic system of views?

Before proceeding any further, let us recall that anthropocentric ideas had become firmly established in the post-Renaissance European mind. Philosophical anthropology was coming into being as the study of man and his nature. Thanks to Ludwig Feuerbach (1804-1872), man became the chief aim and object of philosophy, though admittedly, researchers were primarily interested in the biological nature of man.

Indeed, European thinkers viewed man above all as the product of nature. By investigation nature's mysteries and riches, they also deduced other qualities of the individual. This explains why quite a few scientists ventured to identify man's nature with his inner self, with the subjectivity inherent in him. This being the case, the personalistic tendency gained an increasingly stronger footing in European culture. The fact that various human qualities (such as the ability to reason, sensual wealth and adequate corporeality) were put in doubt by some thinkers, in no way disorientated the humanistic mainstream.

Historically, Marx's philosophy begins with his discovery and identification of the contradiction between social welfare, the dominance of society over natural forces, on the one hand, and the growing dependence and poverty (not only in the material

sense, but also in the sense of one-sided interests, needs and abilities) of the individual who builds this welfare, on the other.

Furthermore, whereas the pre-Marx philosophical anthropologists attempted to extrapolate some constant human values, identifiable at all times, Marx took a totally different approach. He showed the *historicity* of the human race. And not only in the sense that the qualities of the individual were the product of the long evolution of man.

In Marx's understanding, man is a universal and free natural being, who in himself is a reflection of the past, present and future, i.e. not only does he reconstruct past experience in his present-time activities, but he also changes and perfects his own self. This latter point sets Marx's view of the issue apart from the preceding and basically religious theory, which regarded man as a product of creation. Marx's interpretation also makes it possible to depart from the *naturalistic* tradition of the past, which claims that being a part of Nature, man is subject to all of its laws.

Man is a *social being*, and his life has meaning only in terms of communication between individuals. Man's behaviour, abilities and needs can be explained from this angle as predetermined. People themselves make history, but do so under the circumstances which have been created by their previous development.

It should be reiterated that, prior to Marx, the individual was viewed as the supreme product of the natural world, and man's peculiarities and virtues were explained in terms of natural causes. Assessing Ludwig Feuerbach's interpretation of the "abstract individual", Frederick Engels, the political philosopher, who collaborated with Marx in developing the theory of dialectical materialism, wrote that accord-

ing to Feuerbach, "... man is not born of woman; he issues, as from a chrysalis, from the god of the monotheistic religions. He therefore does not live in a real world historically come into being and historically determined."[1]

According to Marx, the ever-growing influence upon the individual of historically established social norms, codes of behaviour and cultural standards was indisputable. This being so, does the individual have any freedom of choice left to him? If the real wealth of the human personality is restricted to man's social relations, how can his own free will manifest itself? It is not without reason that for many decades, many ideological opponents of Marx and Engels kept "catching" them over the fact that Marxism is concerned solely with the general aspect of history.

Even today, Marxist theory, along with its political and ideological practice, is often censured for its disregard for what might be called the *human dimension in history*. Allegations are made that Marxists adopt the automatism of social renovation as their creed (the implication being that they only recognize the effect of impersonal laws; whereas the feelings, aspirations and efforts of an individual are left unnoticed: man's feelings and aspirations are lost in the march of time).

In reality, this has nothing to do with Marx's philosophical views of history. Marx believed himself an upholder of humanism, which he referred to as "real" and "practical". It is not enough to proclaim the principles of humanism: ways should be sought to realize them, and practical steps taken to make the humanitarian programme viable.

This is why the Marxist idea of human personality

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[1] K. Marx, F. Engels, *Sel. Works*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1976, Vol. 3, p. 356.

combines the view of man as a product of his social environment with the recognition of his active role in the cognition and transformation of this environment. As Marx maintains, "...*just as* society itself produces *man as man*, so is society *produced* by him"[1]. As can be seen, Marx combined his humanistic creed with the work for a communist society; a society whereby the elimination of the bases of human inequality, such as private property and exploitation of man by man, racial discrimination, plunderous wars, etc., would put scientific and cultural achievements to man's benefit and would create the material, social and moral prerequisites for the fullest realization of man's inner potentialities. In a strictly scientific way, the idea of a harmoniously developed personality was first put forward by Marx and Engels.

The above considerations are, however, not exhaustive in characterizing the humanistic concept of Marxism. Marx saw history in its entirety as a process of the "humanization of man". Herein lies the principal distinction of Marx's humanistic creed. Moral striving and the search for perfection are inherent in man. The awareness of progress and of historical potentialities is therefore associated with the liberation of rich and hitherto unidentified potentialities in man. The human personality gravitates towards humanization, towards the refinement of mind and the senses.

In relation to these views, work acquires a broader meaning than merely a method of material gain. It also appears as a human requirement, a moral act. Marx wrote: "Among the ancients, we never come across an investigation into which form of landed

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[1] K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974, pp. 91.

property, etc., is the most productive, creates the greatest wealth. Wealth does not appear as the purpose of production, although Cato may well investigate which way of field cultivation is the most profitable, or even Brutus may lend his money at the highest rate of interest. The enquiry is always about which form of property creates the best citizens."[1]

So, the impact of production upon man and his inner world was given thought way back in ancient times. For their part, the bourgeois social sciences considered production solely from the profit-making angle. This gave Marx sufficient reason to assert: "In this way, the old view according to which man always appears in however narrowly national, religious or political a determination as the end of production, seems very exalted when set against the modern world, in which production is the end of man, and wealth the end of production."[2]

The reason why Marx criticized capitalism was not that the worker's development was one-sided (only as a producer of goods), but rather that, given the inequality of ownership over the means of production, every single person within that system had been made "partially human": not only the materially destitute proletarian, but the satiated bourgeois as well.

Recalling my argument with Passmore, I keep thinking that the real wealth of Marx's ideological legacy has not yet been fully appreciated. It reaches us in a great range of foreshortenings and dimensions. At various times, Marx amazes us with his ability for analytical research, the irrefutable logic of a scientist, the courage of a revolutionary, the sobriety and realism of a politician. Did he in fact betray

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[1] K. Marx, F. Engels, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 28, p. 411.
[2] *Ibid.*

his early ideals, his basic views on man and on the purpose of human life, as is alleged by those scholars, who place "early" Marx in opposition to "mature" Marx?

No, he did not.

There have been few people throughout history, who would have devoted their entire lives (Marx's life was full of privations, mammoth tasks and suffering), to give so flawless a corroboration of their youthful ideals, as he did. Normally chary about discussing his self-characteristics, on concluding his work on the first volume of the *Capital*, Marx suddenly exposed himself to one of his correspondents: "Well, why didn't I answer you? Because I was constantly hovering at the edge of the grave. Hence I had to make use of *every* moment when I was able to work to complete my book, to which I have sacrificed health, happiness, and family. I trust that I need not add anything to this explanation. I laugh at the so-called 'practical' men with their wisdom.

"If one chose to be an ox, one could of course turn one's back on the sufferings of mankind and look after one's own skin. But I should have really regarded myself as *impractical* if I had pegged out without completely finishing my book, at least in manuscript."[1]

Did Marx go back on his political principles? Having sided with the working masses from the outstart, he advanced his theoretical studies until, at the turn of 1843-1844, it brought him to substantiate the view of the historic role of the proletariat and ultimately siding with this class, by becoming a Communist.

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[1] K. Marx, F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, p. 173.

NATURE'S WONDER OR HER STEPSON?

The American *Newsweek* carried a short paragraph describing a boy dying of electric shock, as a crowd of onlookers stood by. The victim could have been saved, but nobody made a move—the whole crowd froze stiff, watching the horrible scene. All that seemed unreal to them: they just stood there staring at the happening, like at some kind of gruesome performance, one of those many, which are shown on their home TV screens.

Inhuman? Let us refrain from making hasty judgements. Let us try to sense the atmosphere of the accident. Suppose we were among the "frozen" crowd. Let's give it a bit of thought. How would I react? Would I be capable of conscious behaviour, or would I be rooted to the spot by the hypnotizing scene? Would I show compassion, or would I stiffen, helpless in the face of imminent disaster? It's not easy to answer...

Can it be that man is indeed not always capable of acting in any given situation with his seemingly inherent conviction and responsibility? What is generally meant by a personal act of moral decision? Can it be—paradoxial as it may sound—that man is altogether incapable of conscious behaviour, because he is weak, helpless and overburdened with instincts. We keep reiterating the formula, devised by the ancients: *I count nothing human indifferent to me.* Can we spell it out? As centuries and millennia went by, this formula changed its meaning for people.

"He was a man, take him for all in all" (Shakespeare). What does this imply? Is man prepared to be crucified for the sake of truth, or, conversely, is he unrestrainedly driven towards mysticism and the incomprehensible? Does he strive to

merge with nature, or is he there to destroy it perversely? Does he crave for order, or is he infected with incurable anarchy?

I ask myself again, what I would have done, had I been among the shocked crowd of onlookers. Being guilty of unintentional murder does not really fit into the picture of modern man's moral quest. This naturally compels one to assert: no, I wouldn't have followed the egoistic instinct of self-preservation, or adopted the mood of the passive crowd—no, I would have come out of torpidity and rushed for the master switch... For I am a man!

Is that what man is really like? The millions of TV films and movies we watch today try to convince us of the opposite. Man is infected with sadistic instincts and the drive for destruction, and he has an inherent capability of reducing everything to ashes at any minute...

1985 saw the publication of a book *Dehumanization of Man*, written by two American authors—sociologist Ashley Montagu and psychologist Floyd Matson.

"What is the main theme of your book?" I asked the authors.

"We have discovered evil."

"That's like calling the invention of the wheel the latest hi-tech breakthrough."

"The problem of evil has puzzled man from the earliest days, that's true. There have been attempts at interpreting it by poets and preachers, theologians and philosophers, moralists and politicians... But until recently the problem of evil did not arouse the interest of scientists."

"But why?"

"Because today, suffering humanity is the subject of research."

The authors told me that their task was to sys-

tematize all attempts af a scientific explanation of evil. According to them, it could help in identifying the historical roots and the modern conception of this phenomenon. It is just now that we are being confronted with the syndrome of dehumanization, which manifests itself in the extreme "lifelessness" of man and in the destruction of all human emotions. This socio-psychological type of man has been labelled in a variety of ways, e.g. "a living corpse", "necrophile", "zombie".

An experiment is being staged at Ashley and Floyd's laboratory in New York, with the purpose of demarcating the limits of the individual's compliance with external dictates. A team of volunteers, who play the part of "teachers", prescribe a series of dummy electric shocks to other volunteers, who perform as "pupils".

I visited the "experimental" room. A special control panel has been fitted with electric switches with indications of voltage ranging from 15V to 450V. A warning sign has been provided at the notch marked 375V: *Dangerous! Heavy shock.* The sign *Lethal voltage* marks the edge of the panel. In the adjoining "pupils'" room I can see acoustic installations. According to the experimenters, these devices are capable of imitating human sounds, from a faint moan to an agonizing scream.

The lights have been put on. The experiment has begun. I watch the "teachers'" facial expressions. They are attacking their victims. It is evident that some of the "controllers" take pleasure in "disciplining" those who don't comply readily, but show self-control. Moans can be heard from the "pupils'" room. But what's going on? The "teachers" are increasing the voltage! Some of them appear to be in a trance. The button which sets the voltage at the limit of endurance has long since been pressed. But

the "executioners" keep moving closer to their last weapon—the "lethal voltage" push-button...

Shocked, I leave the scene of the experiment. Why have these ordinary law-abiding citizens, these rank-and-file clerks, engineers and others shown such cruelty? It was not hatred or extreme hostility that made them act like that, in any case. Some hitherto hidden instinct transformed them into beasts.

The syndromes of dehumanization... Given the diversity of themes, techniques and artistic styles, the literature and arts which gravitate toward such subjects are, so to say, attracted by two different magnetic poles. One of these "poles" means success, mutual understanding and contentment, the other means bloodshed, violence and disunity. People at the "second pole", who resent their own social unsettled state, need an outlet to steam off their irritation, annoyance and dissatisfaction, which has been accumulating. The outlet is readily "prompted" to them by way of all sorts of suggested retaliation and "fair requital". No wonder aggressive fanatics appear, capable of plunder and violence, of petrol bomb attacks on peaceful villages...

"What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculty!" speculates Hamlet. Indeed, until recently, man was considered to be the "acme of creation", whereas today, he turns out to be no more than a sadist and a fiend. Poets have glorified "human sanity" throughout the ages. Now it turns out that man is fundamentally insane.

What do Marxist scientists think about this? In itself, the fact that the biological supremacy of man is being put in doubt, evokes no objection. Man is no god and no angel. In the strict sense of the word, man is the only murderer, being the only primate who kills and tortures members of his own species; the animal

kingdom, with only rare exceptions, knows no biologically unmotivated slaughter.

The immediate impact of this contemporary scientific conclusion bowls one over. Care should be taken not to let oneself think of evolution as a meticulously preordained, linear ascent to an absolute harmony. Man is the product of a long, natural evolution, which cannot be regarded as an accumulation of exclusively harmonious instincts and inclinations. A sober-eyed study of man's biological nature helps to shatter any abstract, complacent prejudices. A sensible, shrewd insight into human history makes philosophers free from the teleological concept of preordained purpose (which lies in the end or goal towards which all things move), from the ill-advised faith in the preordination of the historical process. In the same way, the allowance for possible evolutional blunders, as regards the Son of Nature, helps to eradicate time-honoured conceptions of the acme of creation. Indeed, man has no guarantee of absolute perfection and harmony. To assume this viewpoint would mean to fuse with theology, which has, for centuries, been building up the myth of divine Providence.

The biological evolution did not come to an end with the emergence of man. Since the "enthronement" of man as the ruler of nature, other biological species have already come into existence. Besides, evolution knows many examples of animal and plant species which have become extinct, although they previously appeared to be pinnacles of biological creation. Thus mammoths and mastodons have long been extinct and so have other higher mammals. The virgin forests of Europe used to be inhabited by apes, whose mineralized remains are found in stratified rocks. Those animals were creatures of rather high organization but lacked adaptability to changes in

climatic and biological environment. At the same time, cockroaches and scorpions demonstrated a far stronger adaptability.

The ultimate results of natural selection are not necessarily favourable: unsuccessful projects have every now and then been tossed into a "wastepaper basket", and the successful ones duplicated in a countless number of copies. Is man exempt from extinction? Can one be sure that the fantastic supposition that nature has provided all of its creatures with some defensive reflex, some safety valve, is totally unfounded? To give an example, it has been established that the propagation of lemmings is controlled in an inconceivable way: when their numbers become "excessive", they jump into rivers and perish.

A West German newspaper flashed a report about a preparation being developed in a joint medico-biological effort to save the biologically degenerating human species. The idea was to rid man of inborn defects, stimulate an unheard-of mutation and thus present the world with a new living creature, this time a biologically adequate one. The publication used references from Arthur Koestler's scientific writings.

Whenever I come across similar prognostications, I can't help asking myself: When did this fundamental re-evaluation of man take place? Was it brought about by Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus* (1818)? In the novel, a young and gifted scientist is obsessed with the idea of endowing corpses with life; Frankenstein creates a monster in the form of a man, who comes to hate his creator and retaliates against him for his loneliness.

Or, did it occur later, when the premonition of extraterrestrial encounters was dreamt up by H. G. Wells, the famous science-fiction writer? It was he, who wrote about "...a sense of dethronement", a persuasion that man was no longer a master, but one

among other living creatures under the sway of the Martians, who were devoid of any moral principles.

It is not the sense of dethronement that causes bitter resentment, but rather the prosaic, the desperately dull technological recipes for the revival of man. Pills. Hormonal mutation. Shock treatment. Brain transplants. Chemical intervention. The age-long hopes for elevation of spirit, refinement of senses and moral perfection are being shattered in a single blow. The potion for mankind's redemption in pharmaceutical wrapping...

One may agree with Koestler, when he talks of the irreducibility of the highest to the lowest orders, of the organic and the conscious to the "machine-like". On the whole, however, his judgements are quite controversial. It is important, above all, to trace the reasoning which led man to be listed among nature's "freaks" and "stepsons".

What is on the list of pathological symptoms, by which Koestler illustrates the "perverted history of our species"? In the first place, he refers to sacrifice—rather a paradoxial rite—practised by human societies at the dawn of civilization. He stresses that this rite has been practised by many geographically and ethnically unrelated peoples, as a manifestation of a perverted logic, to which our biological species is evidently prone.

In itself, the rite of sacrifice can certainly be regarded as an example of "perverted logic". But to what extent does it testify to the viciousness of man's biological nature? Koestler traces this rite to the life-destroying motivations, allegedly inherent in man. In reality, however, it was rooted in paganism: with the extinction of the latter, sacrifice gradually ceased to be practised.

Not only the social sciences, but modern ethology

(the study of animal behaviour) as well, prove that the attribution of man's aggressiveness to his biological nature is groundless. It has been observed in quite a few animal species that aggressiveness is neutralized by a sequence of actions which can be compared to a ritual.

Thus in wolf-fights, the wolf which feels it is the loser will lie down with its throat exposed to the enemy. But instead of slaughtering the fallen victim, the latter retreats with a howl.

Records of similar behaviour reach us from the early stages of human society's evolution. Ethnographers have described ritual wars between the primitive tribes of central New Guinea, which are not fought for any particular purpose, such as seizure of territory or booty. Ritual combats, or agons, were also practised in ancient Greece. Meanwhile, Koestler maintains that man's ability for killing members of his own species is truly unique. The beast of prey and its victim are always members of different biological species. When attacking a member of its own species, an animal often issues a warning or a threat, but it never implies killing as the immediate sequel.

Indeed, many human instincts have become weaker, because man does not have an inborn natural programme, which would automatically control his behaviour. Does this provide us with sufficient grounds to identify the ineradicable viciousness of man, or his unrestrained aggressiveness? Even within primitive tribes there existed a psychologically distinct tendency for overcoming the blood-lust. Certain tribes practised so-called token wars. Among human beings, those rites probably served the same purpose—to avoid bloodshed. Where is the inborn cruelty, the fatal drive for self-destruction, suggested by Koestler?

It would certainly be wrong to ignore the fact that wars have accompanied human history from its early stages. This enables quite a few anthropologists, including social anthropologists, to assert that people will never be able to suppress their natural desire for mutual extermination. However, the genesis of war cannot be reduced to man's biological nature. It goes far back into the pre-class and class history of the human race.

Will reason prevail, after all? Will mankind succeed in quenching the "predestination of war"? No prophet will take the liberty of drawing an unqualified conclusion. It is a complicated subject, and I will come back to it in due course. At this point, however, it should be emphasized, that war is a social occurrence. And, since nature endowed man with the ability to think logically, he is capable of a conscious living, of taking wise decisions. There is the whole of historical experience to corroborate that.

Reflecting upon the purpose of human existence, Marx asked "...for what is life but activity?" One may put up a framework of noble goals and lofty precepts, and entertain the idea that for the sole reason of being lofty, these ideals must become man's guiding light. There is a different road, however, that of activity and struggle. The road leading to the realization of the supreme purpose in life—for every man.

A world free of wars and weapons, the preservation of nature, the establishment of fair relations between nations and individuals—these are goals worthy of mankind in their magnitude. By working for these goals, the individual becomes aware of his own self and rises to heights which are fitting for the capabilities and purpose of man as an embodiment of reason and soul.

THE "ANTHROPOLOGICAL BOOM"

Reflections about man have always been a key element in philosophy. How far has this ancient subject been influenced by new developments? What new ways of tackling this eternal problem have been devised today? The German philosopher Immanuel Kant maintained: "Two things fill the mind with ever-increasing wonder and awe: ... the starry heaven above me and the moral law within me."

Let's follow this approach. The blue vault above us still hypnotizes us with its grandeur and infinity. But the heavens have changed, all the same. Man has already set foot on the surface of the Moon, and exploration has extended into outer space. It would take an astronomical imagination to comprehend the infinity of the Universe. What an "abyss full of stars" has opened in front of us! The problem of populating distant worlds is being discussed in terms of engineering projects. Plans are being made for a 40 year-long unmanned thermo-nuclear rocket flight to reach the Bernard Star, which is six light-years away from the Earth. Soviet and American astronauts are preparing for a joint flight to Mars.

But every coin has its reverse. Won't the cosmic void become the arena for galactic battles? Won't the skies be set ablaze, with the light of laser beams? Recall Wells' novel *The War of the Worlds*. What worried the author was the striking incongruousness of the size of the impending catastrophe and the ordinariness of life's daily routine. Locomotives pulled trains, machines rattled their parts, newspapers kept being printed... Meanwhile, the lethal weapons had already left their first burn-marks on the earth's surface... The planet was on the verge of being plunged into a nameless and indescribable abyss!

Scientists and philosophers of the past few centuries were convinced that intelligent beings inhabited the whole known Universe, even the Sun. As early as the beginning of this century, the same H. G. Wells anticipated an early encounter between human beings and Selenites. Later there came scientific proof that there was no life on the Moon. Astronomers no longer consider Mars and Venus as possible sources of life within the solar system. Furthermore, as has already been mentioned above, they are coming to the conclusion that intelligent life is a rare, and possibly a unique occurrence. What if we are alone in the Universe? The awareness that the Universe is infinite and unbounded, and that it is "indifferent" to the welfare and happiness of man, gives rise to a tragic outlook.

It is quite natural that the very awareness of being alone in the Universe can result in a diversity of outlooks. The optimistic, rationalistic version can be roughly formulated as follows. If mankind is unique, humanism can be painted in stern, but not at all pessimistic colours. If this is so, then the "thinking reed" (the metaphor used by the 17th century French philosopher Blaise Pascal in referring to man), the intelligent life-form is absolutely priceless! Its uniqueness should be treasured! This immeasurably enhances the value of our cultural accomplishments, and particularly the humanistic ones.

An altogether different train of thought characterizes proponents of the modern naturalistic school of anthropology. Sinister, peremptory statements about the biological deficiency of the Son of the Earth. Grim predictions and almost hysterical appeals. If intelligent life is a random occurrence in the unbounded vastness of the Universe, who is supposed to hear the voice of mankind? Hence the disappearance of thinking matter is a more logical

outcome, than its incomprehensible emergence, let alone preservation. On the whole, it is illogical to cherish a belief in the happy fate of civilization, which has been brought to the brink of disintegration.

Centuries have gone by, but an unflagging philosophical interest in man has remained. What is he? Why, in contrast to other living creatures, was he endowed with the capacity of knowledge? Are there limits to human intelligence? What does man live for? There is hardly albeit a major philosophical trend today that has not given its views on the problem.

Generally speaking, the problem of man has become the focal point for many modern philosophers. Long ago, at the beginning of the 19th century. Immanuel Kant elucidated the problems of human knowledge and human activity basing himself on moral principles. His questions—What is the extent of my knowledge? What must I do? What can I hope for?—are still relevant today.

Nowadays, one can talk of an unusual "anthropological boom" in philosophy. We should perhaps repeat that by this we do not merely mean existentialism, personalism and other philosophical theories, which see all philosophical questions revolving about man, the latter being regarded as the sole object of philosophy. Today, everyone wants to theorize about man, and everyone regards man as the key-note of all philosophical thinking. To give an example, the 18th World Philosophical Congress, held in Brighton, England, in the autumn of 1988 was totally devoted to this subject.

However, an opposing tendency is also coming to light. In particular, the stress is being placed on the "death of man", which allegedly removes this philosophical problem in principle. Arguments are being advanced that the attempts by European thinkers to

find the answers to all philosophical questions in relation to the problem of man, have produced quite a few devastating effects. Attempts to identify the anthropological theme as omnipresent and omnipotent, are said to be fraught with serious miscalculations. Criticism is also being brought against the anthropological approach concerning prognostications about the future of civilization.

Where lies the "insidiousness" and "falseness" of the personalistic position? Above all, in the fact that the exaggerated interest in man in the course of the European cultural evolution has brought about many theoretical distortions. This interest has, in particular, "disfigured" the idea of progress. Today, the proponents of this theory maintain that man should clearly not be trusted, for he harbours numerous vices. Hence the mission of philosophy is to foretell an existence "cleansed" of man, i.e. of "anthropocentrism". They claim that by putting man in the centre of the world philosophers have probably brought about the premonition of danger, and advertize a "distraction" from man, and from the humanistic subject as such. Approaches are being suggested, which no longer have room for personality and in which the subjects of scientific studies are "depersonalized".

Admittedly, at the beginning, these arguments were not aimed at bringing public awareness to the idea of man's "complete downfall". They merely fixed the public eye on the known "inadequacy" of man, i.e. on some peculiarities of his biological imperfection. Noting the absence of features "compulsory" for a thinking creature, the critics had not yet formulated their "final verdict". On the contrary, they voiced the hope that man was capable of compensating those inadequacies.

For example, Arnold Gehlen, a West German

philosopher, maintained that human instincts were underdeveloped. He therefore believed that a certain "insufficiency" was inherent in man's biological make-up. Or, in simpler terms, that he was not firmly "rooted" in nature. Gehlen, however, was far from stating on those grounds that man was doomed and was to fall prey to evolution. On the contrary, he asserted that man was capable of overcoming his inborn "natural patterns".

Gehlen and his adherents saw their mission in showing a certain discrepancy between man as a social being on the one hand, and nature on the other. He nevertheless inclined towards thinking that man was predominantly an animal, a direct offspring of nature. This narrowly biological and psychological approach was in fact corroborative of any sociality being alien to human beings: for if man belongs to the animal kingdom, there is little chance that he will get used to those forms of social organization, which draw him into unaccustomed and increasingly complicated circumstances.

The philosophical anthropologists seemed to be giving a warning: like an iron hoop, sociality has clamped man's animal instincts. Today, this grip has not yet become lethal. But should the cultural pattern of human society become further ramified, and more "external" towards man's biological features, it may, in the long run, lead to a catastrophe. Instincts will shatter the social shackles, the overheated steam will blow up the boiler.

The non-acceptance of "social man" is not only found within the framework of the naturalistic tradition. The same idea is being consistently elaborated by the structuralists. They maintain that the notion of "man" is fading out, to be replaced by the notion of "structure". Thus Michel Foucault, a French philosopher, calls it a blunder to believe that man has

been and will increasingly remain the focal point of scientific knowledge.

Pondering over the concept of "human death", I am coming to the conclusion that, involuntarily, it helps us to understand the phenomenon as a whole. The problem cannot be discarded without producing arguments which surface during an in-depth study of the anthropological theory. In fact, Foucault's theory is but one more fragment of the complex philosophy of man.

Whatever determining characteristics are ascribed to man, be it intellect, will, unconscious self, vitality, gusts of passion or feeling of alienation, they cannot possibly deprive him of his self-value, or of his integrity, albeit relative. To the same degree, the denigration of qualities imminent in human nature does not lead to the devaluation of the anthropological theory as such. On the contrary, it promotes the intensive comprehension of the human phenomenon and the faculties and abilities inherent in human nature.

It nonetheless seems to be worth investigating the specific reasons which underlie so great an interest in the problem of man. What is behind it? In my view, it is above all the unavoidability of the vital problems that constantly beset the individual in the context of his everyday life. The catastrophic destruction of the natural environment, its intensive contamination with nuclear waste, the depletion of the habitual landscape, the sudden spreading of new diseases which threaten to wipe out the human race—all this places man in a highly critical situation, which gives him a feeling of total vulnerability and a presentiment of the possible end of the world. This situation inevitably causes one to think and to make an attempt at understanding the world around us.

As is known, modern science has made great

progress in its study of processes within nature. Scientific thought is moving deeper and deeper into the mysteries of the Universe, into the enigmas of the living and thinking matter. The opportunities offered by genetic engineering, the advancement of artificial insemination techniques, the emergence of preparations capable of changing personality, the transplantation of body organs, artificial organs in particular... Quite naturally, all this shatters the traditional notions of man.

Alternatively, the problem could be formulated as: "What is meant by specifically human values, after all?" Today, we are already moulding specific features that are bound to become the norm tomorrow. This is achieved by intervening in man's genetic processes, and by so doing, we are acting in place of the forces of natural selection. In the future, medical and general sciences will be gaining still greater power over human nature.

We have evidently reached a stage where, within about half a century, or slightly more, man will have changed to the same degree as he has done over the past eight million years, during which he bridged the evolution gap from *australopithecus* to *homo sapiens.* What human values will he retain?

An American researcher John Fletcher emphasizes that it will take only a few decades before human reproduction ceases to be governed by the "law of roulette". People will gain full control over the birth-rate and it will be possible to choose the sex of a future child and to create human life in lab conditions.

On the other hand, this scientific possibility to create "new life" also causes concern. Theories are being revived proclaiming some races, social strata and human outcasts as genetically inferior. There have been suggestions of a social structure whereby

castes of "slaves" and "masters" will be formed on the basis of new technologies. There is serious apprehension about the impacts of genetic mutation, which may produce bizarre life forms. Consider, for example, the hybridization experiments on viruses, in which the "vehicle" of one virus carries the "filling", i.e. the hereditary units, of another virus. The results of such experiments are not always predictable. Or, take the implantation of "non-native" genes into a DNA molecule—the carrier of heredity. Such genetic influences may produce foetal abnormalities.

It is not solely human biology that is being exposed to hard-to-avert dangers. The accompanying psychological problems are becoming painfully acute. Catastrophically, the individual loses confidence in the genuineness of his inner self, in his human essence. The demolition of certain traditional social structures, along with habitual forms of social life, the rapid change in environmental surroundings, resulting in a "future shock", are reflected in mass psychological processes. Plainly speaking, man loses contact with himself, and perceives things and organizations created by him as deeply alien and hostile. He frequently indulges in psychological experiments, in which his own consciousness serves as the testing ground. Thus the addiction to psychotropic drugs can bring about psychoneurosis, and in the long run produce a complete mental disorder, whereby a person becomes withdrawn from reality into a world of hallucinations.

Philosophizing about human nature is further stimulated by world-view and social factors. Modern biology, ethnography, psychology, culturology, history and other branches of science have accumulated a wide range of various data, which demand generalization and philosophical explanation.

However, the true idea of what man is can only be

given by real history, defined by Engels as "the process of evolution of man himself", in the course of which human values have become fully revealed. People are living in a historically concrete and changing world. It is therefore the social processes that allow the fullest expression of the "true human self".

THE ROUTES OF PROGRESS

A certain automatic production line was being operated solely by a robot. In the event of a breakdown, the robot would instantly flash a red light. In addition, a siren would go off to signal interruptions in the supply of raw materials. The robot performed splendidly. It did not tire or break for a cigarette. The only trouble was that it was being handled none too gently by the personnel, and this brought about frequent disruptions. The management decided to fence off the production line. What happened next was that some "workman" climbed the railing and smashed the "wicked" machine with a brick. He was irritated by this constantly vigilant automatic enthusiast. He was sick of its red light and the siren... Frankly speaking, when it boiled down to it, the general working atmosphere was far from being overenthusiastic. This episode is taken from a major Soviet newspaper. The time is the present...

Here is a common scene I happened to witness at a Major's office in a small township on Honshu island,

Japan: A young couple were getting married. The traditional ceremony was followed with precision, including a sermon and the signing of the register. The whole thing was however conducted by... a robot. Nor did it forget to congratulate the newly-weds. But the young couple acted unpredictably: having meticulously followed the wedding procedure, they thought for a moment, then strolled to a nearby church for a repeat wedding.

Every day, newspapers and radio and TV broadcasts tell us about the way new technology and machines are changing our lives. Microprocessor and computer technologies are changing the nature of work, human contacts and daily life. Robots have mastered dozens of delicate operations; they are no longer merely our neighbours, but colleagues as well... But look at the number of social and psychological problems which are brought about in the meantime!

Admittedly, in the age of rapid scientific and technological progress we know little about the "thinking reed". We know how to improve a machine and to adjust a manufacturing process. But we still feel helpless in explaining the riddles of human nature.

Every individual is unique, because since his early days man has been constantly involved in situations where he has had to act consciously and to choose his moral principles and line of conduct. Otherwise, his "human self" would have become meaningless; just as being a member of society one cannot be free from it, it is impossible to rid oneself of the feeling of conscious action, responsibility and intensive inner life, given the specification of what is "truly personal".

The dialectics of individual and social values in social progress are quite complicated, for a person-

ality is formed not only by contemporary culture, but by all the preceding history as well. Man is characterized by the social experience he gains, and by the social relations he is involved in. Yet, in a certain sense, he is "older" than the specific society he belongs to, for he stores up the experience gathered over the centuries, which is relayed to him through culture and traditions.

History is made by people, classes and nations. It is the aggregate outcome of the efforts of the entire human race. At the time of major historic changes, the role of human conscious activity becomes particularly prominent. Furthermore, the historic role of man grows with the increasing scale of historical action.

History has witnessed major ideological movements, religious reforms and periods of social crisis, which went hand in hand with fundamental social change and destruction of traditional outlook, when social dynamics were exposed to their best advantage. A qualitative change in the structure of existence leads to the transformation of the consciousness, the upturn of all the superstructural phenomena. Nowadays, these processes assume such a huge (almost global) scale, that it makes the role of man particularly significant.

There has been unprecedented growth of the role played by state machinery, political parties and mass organizations, all acting on the basis of various programmes and a specific understanding of social processes. The historical machinery is not run by some alien power, regardless of the human will. This machinery is run by people.

What inspires people to act for a particular cause, to strive for a particular goal? Real interests, ideas and orientations. But does this mean that goals can be achieved solely on the basis of human enthusiasm,

conviction and energy? Of course not. To give an example, there is our experience of building socialism in the Soviet Union, a thought-provoking experience, too.

We, in the Soviet Union, refer to our socialism as "developing". Indeed, it has been maturing, both in theory and in practice. But it has nothing to do with the logic of a smooth evolution. On the contrary, it has been a road of dramatic search, serious misconceptions and sometimes tragic errors. There are three models of socialism that we distinguish in our history today, and each of them has its own concept of man and of humanism.

The hard years of the Civil War, which broke out in 1918 soon after the October socialist revolution, brought us a brief experience of *War Communism*. It was a time when revolutionary enthusiasm, the power of the liberated masses was confronted with the harsh laws of survival. In order to survive, the state had to confiscate any surplus agricultural produce, to introduce distribution on an equalitarian basis and impose military-like discipline. At that time, the revolutionary activists believed that all citizens should at once become communists by being turned into proletarians, possessing no property except workers' hands.

There are quite a few misconceptions and paradoxes that history keeps to herself. It is common knowledge that capitalism had for centuries been trying to alienate the worker from property, and had made significant progress to that end. Now this process was to be completed, but this time on behalf of the proletariat. The aim of alienating all people from property and turning them into toilers (and in no way masters!) was at the core of the War Communism policy.

As early as 1921, Lenin saw a different way o

reforming society. The early 1920s were marked for an upsurge of popular enthusiasm and creative activity. Those years became what might be called a revolutionary laboratory of social innovation, a search for the best forms of union between workers and peasants. It was equally important that the entire range of the working people's interests was being matched with an adequate social system.

The idea of the *food tax* (in which a fixed amount of farming produce was requisitioned, the rest being left in the full possession of the peasantry), which heralded the switchover to Lenin's *New Economic Policy,* contained broad economic incentives. It dismantled the existing bureaucratic barriers, which impeded the implementation of the fundamental principle of socialism: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work". Lenin's last writings, remarkable for their wisdom and political ardour, laid down a system of views and the very concept of building socialism in the Soviet Union.

Lenin's concept of socialism called for the broadest possible promotion of democracy. The new society was being built on personal interest, on economic accounting. Socialism was being visualized as a *society of civilized cooperators,* whereby property, remaining in the hands of the working people, assumed a variety of bonds with private individuals. Such was the concept of the post-revolutionary growth of socialism.

But history is known to be capable of outwitting even profound thinkers. Unexpected tendencies can make headway contrary to logic and the political mainstream, with grim consequences. The attempts at radical "demolition" of property ended in failure. Not only did it resist abolition, but assumed bizarre new forms. A peculiar type of possession came into being—the possession of an administrative post or a

state administrative function. Paradoxial as it might seem, as early as 1921, the country that had just emerged from an anti-bureaucratic revolution, was being run by four million newborn bureaucrats.

The inertia of what took place in the 1930s and the inertia of the contemporary economic system led to the emergence of a third model of socialism (the previous two being the "War Communism" and the "system of cooperators"), which, as we see it, can be defined as the *state-bureaucratic model.* The system of administrative command, which had begun to take shape in the process of industrialization and which received a fresh impetus during collectivization, had told on the whole socio-political life of the country. Once established in the economy, it restricted the development of the democratic potential of socialism, holding back the progress of socialist democracy.

In the years of Stalin's personality cult (1930s-1950s) much was being said about humanism. The emphasis was, however, being laid on class stratification. All values were supposed to be viewed from the angle of class interests. Simultaneously, a malicious campaign was launched against so-called "abstract humanism". It was being treated as humanism "at large", as an abstract form of love for mankind. It brought about a notion that the individual could be sacrificed for the sake of averagely-impersonal goals. The individual was regarded as a "cog" in the state machinery, the latter pursuing some sort of lofty ideals.

Today, we know the reverse side of such "humanism". An atmosphere of intolerance, hostility and suspicion was created in the country. All this had a dire effect on the country's socio-political development and produced grim consequences. But even under those conditions, the ideals of true humanism, human courage and dignity were not lost.

What was it like, living in the overbureaucratized "system of coordinates"? How could a few valiant individuals resist the omnipotency of the bureaucratic monster? I can't help saying a few words about the life of Academician Nikolai Ivanovich Vavilov, an outstanding Soviet geneticist, whose centenary was marked in 1987. He had great strength of will and courage. He walked untravelled, often barely penetrable paths on all five continents. He survived an encounter with bandits in Ethiopia and a dangerous rock-slide in the Caucasus. He spent a night close to a lion's den in the Sahara desert. He was the first European to penetrate a high-altitude mountain area in Afghanistan, although he had neither experienced guides, nor maps.

He was a talented researcher, passionately devoted to his cause. He strived ardently to unveil the enigma of life, in order to bestow it on mankind. He tackled tasks which we refer to as "global" today. Vavilov was advancing genetics—a science that was completely new in those days. Upholding Darwin's theory of evolution, he proved that genetic mutability could be formulated into a definite system. Vavilov's law is valid for the entire living world, and is being confirmed by detailed modern experiments.

What has been said about Vavilov so far, characterizes him as a scientist. What can be said of him as a personality, as a fighter for humanism? Those who remember him from the town of Saratov (in the Volga Region) in the semi-starvation of the post-revolutionary years, describe the way he cared for his famished students, laid up with typhoid fever.

Vavilov was already serving a prison term as an "enemy of the people" by the time of the German blockade of Leningrad in 1941-1942, but his disciples who remained in the famine-stricken city never touched the huge seed reserves accumulated at his in-

stitute. It was a collection of cultured plants seeds from all over the world, and they knew that Vavilov had risked his life to obtain some of these. And so, people died of famine next door to a comparative feast.

In the late 1920s—early 1930s, Vavilov's attention was attracted by a young agronomist Trofim Lysenko. Vavilov helped him advance in his career. However, the subsequent developments turned out to be tragic for Vavilov. Stalin began to show Lysenko undeserved attention. The existing bureaucratic system made him the country's leading biologist and put him at the head of the All-Union Agricultural Academy. Having gained the monopoly in agricultural science, Lysenko, although lacking the necessary scientific background, launched a fierce attack against genetics. This started off a period of struggle between him and Vavilov.

It was not a clash of personalities, or a contest between rivals, but a battle between a humanistic and an anti-humanistic outlook, a collision of two irreconcilable viewpoints. Vavilov was being urged to admit his "errors", and agree to a compromise in exchange for his life and a relatively stable career. But he firmly dismissed the possibility and openly rose against Lysenko, although aware of the personal dangers involved. He was prepared to give his life for his convictions.

Once the non-professionalism, and consequently, the adventurism of Lysenko had won the upper hand, it became a tragedy not only for Vavilov and for genetics, but for Soviet science as a whole. It also became a national disaster. Vavilov died in confinement. He died of malnutrition, but he never surrendered... He continued working on a monograph, and delivered lectures to his inmates. When the death sentence was read out to him, he maintained his human dignity and stood by his convictions.

In the period of Stalin's personality cult there developed an approach to people as to merely cogs and wheels in the impersonal state machinery. The bureaucratic methods of administration in those years gravitated towards the simplistic model of barrack-like communism, and imposing it ousted everything and everyone that was dynamic and unorthodox. Renouncing the complexity and diversity of cultural life and human initiative, it proposed primitive simplicity instead.

Bureaucracy is intrinsically anti-humane. But while ousting everything original and personal from culture, it always refers to supreme common interests, claiming to be acting in the interests of the people. Yet no common interests are conceivable if they are not related to the specific interests of people, or to personalities.

As in Lenin's time, we talk of bureaucracy today unafraid to recognize the evil. On the contrary, exposing and unmasking it in public means releasing the people's energy which we need to combat this social evil. We are returning to Leninist principles in the running of society and the state. And, consequently, in the life of man, since he does not accept a situation where his opinion and views are ignored, and where he is seen simply as part of the workforce rather than as a citizen, the master of his society and his country. The nation is awakening from lethargy to become actively involved in the life of society. We are perfectly aware that without paying heed to a great range of personal, collective and social interests, without drawing people into creative activities, it will be impossible to solve a single task. Socialism is the living creativity of the masses. Given his creative diversity, man is the chief maker of history. Hence the ultimate goals of perestroika which is underway in the Soviet Union: to renovate all aspects of life, to

render to socialism the most up-to-date forms of social organization, to let the humanistic character of socialism reveal itself to the fullest extent within all its decisive aspects—economic, socio-political and moral. The entire intellectual and cultural potential of society is being mustered to help in moulding a socially-active personality, which is spiritually rich, fair and conscientious.

The chief task today is to elevate man spiritually, respecting his inner self and fortifying his moral principles. This task is only feasible under socialist pluralism. A truly socialist society bases itself on a diversity of forms, trends and cultural traditions. Nowadays, when more and more nations, at different stages of development, are being drawn into the orbit of socialism, the multiformity of society's life is increasing. Socialism, therefore, presupposes the broadest possible range of human alternatives.

IDEALS AND VALUES

An experiment was once staged in France. Three specially-prepared programmes were shown simultaneously on three national television channels. One was a video-recording of a gripping sports match. Another was a feature film, intended for a cultural audience. The third channel offered a popular-science programme about the Universe.

Planning the simultaneous televizing of the three programmes at a time when nearly every French family gathers in front of a TV screen, the sociologists and psychologists wanted to know which programme would attract the greatest number of viewers. Quite naturally, attempts were made at predicting the results of the experiment. In fact, there were two alternatives: they would either show a

desire for a profound effect, resulting from a deep artistic impression, or for a psychological switchover from the humdrum of everyday life to a superficial, nervous excitement. The experiment sponsors wanted to prove that the common spectator needed some relaxation producing the so-called restorative effect, allegedly as the inevitable tribute to modern industrial civilization.

We shall not argue about the scientific strictness of the experiment. The results of the poll, however, shattered both versions suggested by the experimenters: the spectators gave preference to the popular-science programme.

But why? Can it be that in the age of the information avalanche some people still look for popular knowledge? Doesn't serious art provide a comprehensive picture of existence? Can it be that man of today is prepared to give up watching an exciting sports game or a highly artistic performance merely to be told about what goes on in the depths of the Universe?

Man wants to know the distinctions which set him apart from the non-human world. He wants to know the moral essence of history. He wants to know if knowledge is boundless. Whether man is alone in the Universe. Whether the world is governed by Reason. Whether happiness can be the purpose of social progress...

People want to grasp what is going on in the world; they try to paste together the fragments of their social and personal experience. They seek answers to the ultimate questions of existence because human life needs justification. Where consciousness vanishes and human values deteriorate, vegetable life comes in their stead. The drive for an integral, unfragmented vision of the world is probably an intrinsic and hard-to-satisfy human requirement.

But have we gone too far in this unjustified idealization of man? Does he really lament over the absence of world outlook? Does his ever-toiling soul really crave for the utmost knowledge of existence? And why should it? Modern civilization has provided man with everyday amenities, and has surrounded him with a great variety of useful things. Drop in front of a TV and watch an athletic contest. Switch to another channel if you don't like it. Bach had to walk some ten miles to listen to an organ concerto. You don't have to...

Can it really be that human life is empty without satisfaction of moral requirements? In fact, what worries a lot of people is not the moral requirements, but the bodily desires. I can recall the emphatic shout of a formerly notorious hippy: "What the hell do I care about your spiritual intricacies, when I've got a problem with my orgasm?" Can it be that to resolve his purely personal problems, man would mobilize the boundless spiritual arsenal? Generally speaking, does anybody care about abstract metaphysics in the age of pragmatic calculations, and narrow engineering solutions?

It was only a short time ago that we, in our society, condemned the "everyday consciousness", counterposing it with "scientific views". But is common sense, the reason which governs the individual, really so bad? It was common sense that helped many agriculturists handle fertile lands with due care, and it also governed those who protested against the hasty plans for the "conquest of nature". Obvious illusions will always be shattered by the intrinsic realism of human intellect. In this sense, Andersen's fairy tale about the naked emperor, which so glaringly allegorized the controversy between administrative stupidity and naive wisdom, can very well be retold in the language of modern sociology.

Indeed, the stability of routine notions often serves as a peculiar realistic reaction against the bizarre world of pseudo-scientific and ideological assumptions, which reconcile refined fictions, crude allegories and doctrine. It is hardly worth complaining that the social consciousness is capable of withstanding these assumptions, defending itself with "slow-wittedness".

Today, we don't have to resort to methods of "hidden passivity". On the contrary, various sections of the population voice their opinion openly in the press and succeed in promoting effective decision-making. For example, a team of Soviet writers, with active support from the general public, raised the issue of the danger of pollution in Lake Baikal, the ecological dangers in the Baltic Region and of ecological problems in general. The project to reverse the country's northern rivers was widely debated in the press. Scientists proved that despite a certain economic benefit, the realization of the project would bring about unpredictable and disastrous ecological consequences. As a result, the project was rejected by the government.

Does this mean that democracy has now been fully instituted? Can it be claimed that the vigorous socio-political campaign has reached everyone? It would be premature to assume this. The elimination of social indifference is still a problem here. Socialist humanism is non-abstract: it cannot be directed towards caring for people at large, leaving children, old people or alcoholics, for example, out in the cold. Thus a Soviet Children's Fund has been established on the initiative of writer Albert Likhanov. Various charity committees and teetotallers' societies are sprouting up all over the country. We don't want anyone to feel an outcast.

Until recently, we never admitted that there were

openly anti-social groups in our society. Today, we are writing with increasing frequency about people with neurotic tendencies, such as alcoholics and drug-addicts. Journalists have adopted a particular abbreviation FIP, which stands for formerly intelligent person. It is used to describe persons who have turned into lumpen-proletarians. As a rule, these are degraded intellectuals, who have dropped out of their profession and have become the social dregs.

The problem of the younger generation has become the subject of heated debates. Do youth subcultures exist in our country? Don't we have quite a few young people lost in social oblivion, and without a sense of purpose? Should anything be done about the youngsters' craze for Western vogue? Different opinions can be heard, sometimes highly extremist, causing a great deal of controversy. The processes which are brewing up among the younger generation attract unprecedented interest of sociologists, psychologists and philosophers.

...For many centuries in European history there were few, if any, differences between the younger and the older generations. They held the same views and dressed in the same fashion. In Shakespeare's day, for instance, children's clothes were tailored from the adult designs, the only difference being the size. A young boy tried to imitate his father's ways and habits, and a young girl, her mother's.

The situation, however, has changed drastically over the past two centuries. The life expectancy of the generation has been raised, and life generally seems to be moving faster; children have found themselves in different circumstances from those of their parents' youth. Hence the differences in habits, values and ideals. As early as the 19th century, for example, young romanticists renounced the ideals of the enterprising bourgeoisie.

Probably at that time youth subcultures first came into being, although the terms "sub-culture" and "counter-culture" were coined much later, some 20 or 25 years ago.

As is known, the 1960s were a period of youth movements and riots that swept the world from West Berlin to Bangkok, and it was then that the young students and young intellectuals who led the riots first came up with the slogan of an "alternative way of life" for the younger generation. The meaning of this was to break away from parents and adults generally, and to demolish social institutions which shackled moral, intellectual and sexual freedom.

During the years of stagnation in the Soviet Union (1970s-early 1980s), the official ideology and social sciences were fuelling an artificial creed that the whole of Soviet society was thinking in unison and that the models of conduct we had inherited from previous generations were being fully accepted by the young people. This dogma has done us a great deal of harm, because in taking care not to abuse it, we for a long time pretended to see our youth in a rosy light.

Things were more or less the same during the 1940s and 1950s, when groups of "gilded youth" first came into existence—the smart youngsters with money to spend, who led bohemian lives. The tendency extended itself to the 1960s, when the youth culture came to oppose scientific officialdom in its own specific way. At that time (in the 1960s), the polemics between "physicists" and "lyricists" were brought into the headlines—set off by a letter to writer Ilya Ehrenburg from a young woman who was worried about the stone-heartedness of her husband, a physicist, and his ironic attitude to everything that did not yield to concrete analytical calculation. On second thoughts, the conflict was not between "physicists"

and "lyricists", but between two diametrically opposed systems of values, two youth subcultures.

But let us continue. The 1970s, which inaugurated an era of grandiose construction projects, at the same time promoted an intricate emotional superstructure. It was the 1970s that brought the peak of popularity to guitar ballad singers Bulat Okudzhava, Vladimir Vysotsky and Yuri Vizbor, whose songs dealt with the burning issues of the day as seen by the young people at that time: their nostalgia for nature, which was being subjected to the devastating "industrialization onslaught", their loneliness and shabby living conditions (living in tent communes soon ceases to be a romantic adventure...).

It was probably the open disregard for the intricacies of young people's awareness, for their behaviour, psychology and world outlook, that explained the estrangement between the younger and the older generations.

A new generation cannot be raised solely in the mould of the previous one. And just as the differences in values and outlook are natural and unavoidable between different generations, they are natural and unavoidable within a single generation. Complicated processes are taking place in the youngsters' midst today. Numerous unofficial groups are sprouting up here and there. What kind of public reaction do they arouse? By no means an unequivocal one. For example, there are groups for environmental protection and for monument preservation, amateur club associations, and a youth initiative foundation, which only help in encouraging the social activity of young people.

There are, however, groups which present quite a few problems. Take, for instance, the Heavy Metal fans, the "rockers", the "hippies", the rock group and football fans, the "god-seekers". It must be

noted that all these movements were cultivated in the West prior to taking root in the Soviet Union. Various non-traditional religious groups have emerged today in this country, too. There is an immense variety of religious beliefs and practices ranging from the ancient Oriental religions to devil worship, mysticism and miracle healing. All sorts of worshippers, such as devotees of Jesus Christ "Superstar", adorers of the Hindu warrior-god Krishna and members of the Yoga brotherhood, are forming their groups and sects in various parts of the country. These worshippers denounce scientific knowledge, claiming to possess exceptional wisdom and spirituality.

We adults ourselves trigger the youngsters' protest merely by imposing upon the younger generation our own standards of behaviour and thinking, and by forbidding everything which we see as a "deviation" from "the norm"—be it shaved side-burns, or youngsters' gatherings. In many instances, the unofficial groups become something like a testing ground for young people, being the only place where they can display initiative and enterprise (which doesn't seem to be a bad thing, after all). I believe that if the younger generation is not given the chance to have a world of its own, this may lead to the elimination of the polyphony of our cultural life styles, with all the foreseeable and highly undesirable consequences for our society.

We had, until recently, been sticking a label of "political indifference" on those who did not show an interest in public affairs or took no part in the official ideological dogmas and joined unofficial associations. Today, we are well aware that the problem is far more complicated. "Sluggishness", "inertness", "indifference" of the routine consciousness in fact reflected the desire of specific social groups to preserve and express their own interests and con-

cerns. Characteristically, these groups have been displaying a vested interest in social affairs under the conditions of perestroika.

Does all this imply that the need for world outlook is a rare quality, a unique phenomenon? Or, that it comes upon man as a thunderbolt at the moment of his spiritual weakness, of his search for new ideals or new alternatives?

"World outlook" means a "world view". But what kind of view in essence? What are its specific characteristics? To what degree does it govern human behaviour?

World view has been accompanying individuals for centuries and even millennia. Suddenly the question has been raised in socio-philosophical writings: Hasn't it become a relic? I recall a meeting with Daniel Bell, an American sociologist, a founder of a number of theories which have become quite popular in the West. He rose in the 1960s as the author and commentator of the concept of "deideologization", i.e. of the collapse of the ideological systems.

"Mr. Bell," I asked him, "are you really suggesting that metaphysical searching be replaced with specific empirical knowledge?"

"That's right. For many centuries people have been anxious to get answers to basic questions: What does man live for? And what is the meaning of human existence? Where would you propose to find the answers?"

"Well, I think they could be the result of philosophical thinking, theological revelations, moral searching..."

"By saying this you seem to recognize the speculative nature of those questions. The answers have been much the same. Quite naturally, mythology, religion and ideology contained postulates as to what kind of life to lead and what purpose in life to pursue. The

question is, nonetheless, how scientific and verified those postulates were. They all were a product of pure speculation, anyway."

"But is modern science capable of explaining the meaning of human life?"

"No, it isn't. But it is moving in that direction along an analytical, I'd say a scientifically-verified road. This is the essence of my concept. Ideologies fade out to give room to expert knowledge."

Yet can historic goals in principle be set outside a world view?

Recent developments in the capitalist world have shown us an imposing, although not fully realized experiment. About three decades ago, the leading thinkers in the West announced the collapse of a whole era in mankind's development. They proclaimed the downfall of every kind of world view and heralded the arrival of a new era, which would allegedly liberate man from the dictates of scientifically unverifiable social ideas. The masses, according to those theoreticians, were infected with consumer's psychology. They gravitated towards prosperity and personal welfare. Modern technology gave them everything they required.

Hence the conclusion: live a simpler life, without cudgelling your brains. Life is short and not worth wasting on meaningless pursuits. And you can do without moral sermons. They only complicate life. As regards spirituality and the search for ideals and an integral world view, all this was labelled by the technocrats as "intellectual fantasies" and "romantic drivel", which only interfered with the mindless and pleasant utilization of consumer goods. They regarded world view to be some intellectual whim, a spiritual exuberance, asserting that the interest to abstract problems was pure atavism, a blind dictate of the self-destructive belief in ideas.

This line of thinking gave rise to relevant social practice. A time for doing away with all kinds of "highbrow" stuff began. The era of technocratic expertise took over. It was announced, in particular, that there was not a single human life that could not be "adjusted", "correlated" or "rectified". The need was not for thinkers, but for experts, not for ideas, but for prescriptions.

However, the decades that followed brought in a striking revelation. It turned out that the attempt at removing ideological approach from public affairs was not only unrealistic, but also fraught with unpredictable consequences. It created a situation whereby the individual's behaviour became socially-unmotivated, often affected, excessively emotional and even destructive. Society started to disintegrate. The absence of a common ideology would give rise to numerous problems, which were in fact insolvable, for there was nothing with which to compensate or to replace a clear-eyed vision of the world.

There is no doubt that changes in life based on informatics, will bring to the fore "deideologization" issues a number of times. The technological and informational invasion breeds the illusion that any human problem can be solved by way of engineering expertise. No more need to study the public mood — a computer will print out the answer.

There are still many people today who, deliberately or unconsciously, "excommunicate" the world view as a comprehensive vision of the world and indulge in departmental expertise. Yet, this kind of "shop" consciousness uses its own world-outlook system of argumentation. The "actions" which it provokes are after all dictated by a specific world view. This in many ways distinctive world view has self-evident inborn defects. It appears flat-footed and shallow. Primitive reasoning and absence of comprehensive

approaches reveal certain shortcomings in human mentality. Current ecological problem serves as an example.

A mature world view expresses not only *knowledge*, but also a certain personal *system of values*, demonstrated in the individual's attitude to the fundamental aspects of his natural and social existence and to the meaning of human life. The specificity of such a world outlook is that it gives guidance to the life of the individual.

World outlook is universal precisely because it bases itself on the totality of mankind's moral experience and reflects the essence of human existence. The desire to "blot out" the metaphysics of spirit also has a world-outlook character, paradoxial as it may seem. Breadth of thought results neither from speculative knowledge, nor from a diversity of information, nor from a sweeping expertise, but from the individual's stand in life.

Forming a world view and disseminating knowledge are different things. Human subjectivity is by far more fertile. It is not knowledge alone that gives man social guidance—for he lives in a world of arduous and conflicting goals, strivings and aspirations. And still, quite often we give astonishingly crude explanations for the motives underlying human behaviour. Meanwhile, the ancient Greeks already knew that man was torn apart by the demons of passion, and that he was often the slave of impulse, caprice or chance.

The three most important elements in man's spiritual life were distinguished by ancient thinkers: reason, emotions and will. In the centuries that followed, fiction writers pointed to the disharmony between these three elements. But in some unwitting way, we have since lost possession of these intellectual and spiritual acquisitions. We have developed

a notion, that should an individual display insensibility, spontaneity or contradictoriness, he does so for the sole reason of lacking the necessary information.

Some philosophers absolutize the reason inherent in man, whereas others altogether dismiss the possibility of the rational, i.e. motivated and therefore autonomous, behaviour of the individual. But can one speak of, say, conscious choice, at a time when the ideology based on psycho-analysis is trying to prove that human behaviour is "programmed" by forgotten childhood memories and by repressed impulses and desires?

From this point of view, even the most secret and purely spontaneous human action can be predicted and explained in advance, just as its inevitability can be proved. This being the case, what is left of human subjectivity? There are scores of thinkers today who assert that man's inner world has in many ways been the product of brainwashing, because it has become the object of total manipulation on the part of official ideology.

It is only natural that these and similar concepts should see the embodiment of theoretical outlook in a state machinery designed to select and tame people. History shows, however, that totalitarian systems are short-lived: the inner creative potential of an indoctrinated conformist mind is zero.

VALUES AND IDEALS

Our era offers numerous alternatives not only to the individual, but also to mankind as a whole. Which way is the world developing? Have we chosen the correct road? Goals may vary depending on what we understand by "progress".

Consider a simple and illustrative situation. A character in an Arabian tale is to name three magic wishes. No more than three—and they will be fulfilled... Let us imagine ourselves in the shoes of this Oriental character. Three wishes and the world will turn into paradise. But how are we to guess? What must we choose?

Paradoxically enough, modern man is not prepared to deal with a situation as simple as this. Can it be that having been given a chance to get "anything", man is unable to choose the most important?

Here is a modern tale. The founder of cybernetics Norbert Wiener liked to tell a tale about a monkey's paw. It is about a British sergeant, who, on his return from India, met his friend, an old English worker. The sergeant showed him a talisman—a shrunken, mummified monkey's paw. The legend behind it was that some Indian wizard, in his desire to prove the folly of tempting fate, endowed the paw with the magic power to fulfill any three wishes of its next three owners.

The sergeant said he did not know what the first two wishes of the first owner had been, but his last wish was to die instantly. Himself being the second owner, he refused to disclose his personal experience, except to say that it was horrible. He said that he was going to burn the monkey's paw. But the old worker snatched it from him. He was eager to test its magic power, especially as his financial position had become difficult since his retirement.

His first wish was for 200 pounds. The instant he pronounced it, there was a knock at the door and in came a messenger from the firm where the old man's son worked. He told the father that his son had just been killed in an accident. The company was not liable for the accident, he said, but all the same it was offering 200 pounds as compensation.

The grief-stricken father made his second wish: let his son be home with him again. Immediately, there was a knock at the door and in came... his son's ghost. Frozen with horror, the father whispered his third wish: let the ghost vanish...

Is man aware of what he wants? Is he at all capable of realizing the meaning of his life and identifying his guiding star?

Suppose that genetic engineering has already made it possible to deliberately alter the biological nature of man. What kind of genes shall we cultivate? And what kind of genes shall we reject? Immediately, there emerges the problem of alternative human behaviour.

The Tree of Purposes. Some people see the source of well-being and the meaning of life in hedonistic orientations; they think that only the "pleasure centres" should be cultivated and enhanced in human nature. These ideas give rise to a whimsical fantasy, whereby a race of hypersexual humans could settle somewhere by the sea and devote themselves untiringly to the pleasures of natural existence.

Others think that man's essence lies in his consciousness, his intellect. In their view, all the potentialities of man's biological nature should be made to serve the cognition, the human faculty for analytical thinking. This is how various projects for the spiritual evolution of the "thinking reed" are brought into existence, aimed at polishing the human mentality.

The writings of my Western colleagues reveal one more version, which provides guidance in the understanding of the "specifically human" values. According to these scholars, it is neither the body, nor the intellect that are the source of man's spiritual evolution. They place special hopes on the human psyche. From this point of view, the huge ocean of

consciousness can be transformed, if it becomes possible to reach the "restricted areas" of the psyche with the help of special medical drugs which stimulate intuition and imagination; once this is achieved, it will be neither the corporeal, nor the intellectual powers of man, but his psychic potential that will determine the future of humanity.

Without doubt, there are vast opportunities today for influencing man's biological and spiritual nature. But it turns out in the meantime that neither the very essence of man, nor his mission in the world, have been matched with an adequately profound world outlook. What are man's needs? What is the meaning of his existence?

What are we? Where do we come from? Where are we going? Several varying propositions can be identified in today's Western literature (including the socio-philosophical Marxist writings). Version one: *The meaning of human life is generally a far-fetched category, for nature knows no purpose*; it has created man along with other living creatures by pure chance. This, however, does not give us proof. Even if an individual's life is unpredictable and devoid of predeterminations. In any event, a conscious renunciation of a regimented life plan is also a purpose of sorts. Nature's purposelessness in no way means that a sense of purpose should be denied to man. The social form of human life must, as I see it, be matched with a conscious development of human values, with a realization of ideals. Consequently, the absence of purpose in nature cannot be regarded as an argument against the search for such a purpose within the world's established social order.

Other thinkers maintain that *human existence does, without doubt, have a meaning, but it is submerged and therefore difficult to identify.* Today's scientists do not yet have the wisdom to do this. This version is in the

same order of reasoning as, say, a statement that although at present we don't know the nature of elementary particles, or that of fields, or other primary substances, we are confident that we will discover it. The same applies to the meaning of human life, the destiny of human existence. From this point of view, the purpose of human civilization is to perfect science and intellect. Thinking matter attempts to solve the secrets of existence in its entirety. By expanding his knowledge of the Universe, man is coming nearer to understanding the direction of evolution. I find this version optimistic. I am also convinced that it is not reason alone that unveils the meaning of life, history and progress. Human will, imagination and emotions are the sum total that serves to express human subjectivity and helps man in unravelling the secret of the Tree of Purposes.

There is one more version: *the meaning of human life is in serving society and the progress of mankind* (supposing it is on an upward trend). Devotion to the ideals of progress helps to unfold human potential, and minimizes human suffering, both in the life of today and for generations to come. In my view, however, this version should be accompanied by a clear-cut definition of what is implied by the word "progress". Numerous examples can be cited from history, when anti-humane actions were carried out in the name of progress, and real human interests were simply ignored.

The meaning of life is in moral self-perfection. This is version four. Modern social practice, however, is full of instances of mass immorality, in fact, of total absence of ethical norms. Social usefulness is often the criterion of morality. But it was expounded by Hegel, and later by Engels, that with the emergence of class-divided society, the worst human qualities, such as greed, lust for power and cruelty, had served

progress in a rather effective way. Evil and immorality had sometimes been useful. A person who "abides by the laws of conscience" often brings disappointment not only to himself, but to the people around him.

The aforementioned versions are, without doubt, only hypothetical, for they do not fully cover the notion of the "Tree of Mankind's Purposes". I am citing them here only to support the proposition that people have gone sufficiently far in controlling the forces of nature, in manipulating the things they create, unravelling the mysteries of the Universe and solving the problems of sophisticated technologies. But they have been giving too little thought to the common, global goals, which integrate mankind into a single whole.

Culture has evolved quite a few systems of human values that provide the criteria by which the goodness or badness of an action is to be judged. The supreme values are, without doubt, the ideals of truth, kindness and beauty. These absolutes unite the human race in the striving for perfection and everlasting spiritual kinship. The universal ethical values undergo trials in the course of historical development.

To be more accurate, a human value is something that holds significance for an individual. For example, everyone is aware of being mortal. Psychologically, however, man often refuses to accept this truth and turns to things he believes to be sacred in order to fill his existence with serenity and meaning. Immortality, however, is not solely a value: Frederick Engels, for instance, reiterated that at a certain stage of development, the idea of immortality appeared as a preordained fate. Often enough, as among the Greeks, it was accepted not at all as a consolation, but as a fate, and often enough, as a positive misfortune.

True, people show different attitudes to life and its intrinsic values, to the transformation of life as the meaning of man's existence, to the joys of living and to moral norms. Remarkably, an individual sometimes develops an illusion that all human values and orientations are eternal and history-unrelated, that is, that they are always the same.

Without doubt, people have at all times hankered after truth and kindness, the refinement of their personal existence. Values, however, do not remain unchanged over the span of human history. Let us take a mental note of that. What kind of changes have these values undergone? What is believed to be an indisputable value nowadays? Condemned to death, Socrates drank a poisoned potion. It was a manifestation of human dignity. Historically about the same time, a subject of an Oriental empire did not at all believe personal pride and freedom to be morally beneficial. On the contrary, guiding himself by different cultural standards, he felt happy to dissolve his own personality in the grandeur of the monarch, kissing the dusty soil on which his emperor had set foot.

The problem of moral values occupies a prominent place in modern Western ethics. Philosophers, sociologists and aestheticists are trying to comprehend the very notion of a human value, to reveal the process whereby previous moral orientations are discarded, and show the impact that may be had by this process upon social consciousness and culture. In so doing, some of them believe that the Marxist interpretation of history rejects human values as a subjective category incompatible with the principles of pure science.

I recollect an encounter with Emmanuel Levinas, a French philosopher. He speaks Russian quite fluently and has studied Marxism rather diligently. Levinas

has the conviction that Karl Marx and Frederick Engels were absolutely indifferent to moral values.

"Did Marx and Engels renounce ideals?" I asked my opponent.

"No. But that's not the point I'm making. They did recognize ideals, of course, but they constantly emphasized the priority of scientific knowledge."

"Do you believe then that ideals are incompatible with scientific knowledge?"

"But they identified any moralizing as 'false consciousness'!"

"Pardon me, but it was something very different that Marx and Engels referred to as 'false consciousness'. They implied a specific type of mentality, characterized by fantasizing and a pseudo-scientific bent. But they never renounced the part played by human value in social dynamics."

Indeed, Marxist philosophy combines the objective study of historical laws with the recognition of the interests, demands and moral orientations, which motivate human behaviour. Surveying the numerous orientations that have become established in the domain of culture, such as hedonistic, ascetic and pragmatic, Marxism has always strived to expose their social roots. As stated above, the theological, hedonistic and stoical creeds do not belong entirely to the past; they spring up today too—within the context of discussions about the Tree of Purposes.

...An Alitalia jumbo jet has just landed at Sardinia's airport. We get off the plane and walk down the steps. It is scorching hot. We are a team of Soviet philosophers, due to meet our colleagues in Rome in an hour.

We see people running from all directions towards the airport building. They seem to be very excited and they keep their eyes glued on the plane we have just disembarked. The airport clerks leave their seats

one after the other. Everyone seems to be in a rush. The offices become lifeless. People's postures show rapt attention, amazement and anticipation.

What's going on? Having got hold of an airport clerk, we try to make him understand that there are people waiting for us in Rome. Time's running short and we may be late. Why aren't we leaving?.. At this moment a man emerges from our plane. Slowly, he comes down the boarding ramp. He is wearing jeans and a stately black beard, and has a guitar slung over his shoulder. The crowd goes crazy. They lift him off his feet and carry him along. All flights have been cancelled. The place is overflowing with jubilance: the famous rock-star, the idol of the neo-Christian cults is in Sardinia! Here and now! It takes only a few minutes, but it is enough to mess up the place and to make everyone dizzy with excitement. The airport clerks drop their ticket punches. Aircraft sit stranded on the runways...

We were soon away, and Sardinia was already a mere speck on the horizon. For some reason I remembered Oleg Blokhin, a Soviet football star of European rating, who couldn't score his 200th goal no matter how. As if bewitched, the ball would hit the goalpost. The player was desperate, and his team became highly-strung. He fired a succession of penalty-kicks, but alas!... It seemed that the ball would never be netted. But at last, the moment of triumph came. The jubilation of the coach and the fans was beyond description.

Here is another ambition. While visiting the French city of Bordeaux, I was shown Henry Weston, a 24-year-old Englishman, who wanted to travel the world on foot.

...My friend Andrei Bakanin, a surgeon, was killed in Afghanistan. No sooner had he completed a complicated operation and peeled off his rubber gloves,

than there came a burst of machine-gun fire. Andrei spread himself over his young patient in an attempt to protect the human life, which he had just saved with the help of a scalpel.

Tenghiz Abuladze, a Georgian movie-maker decided to shoot a film about a tyrant and his atrocities. In the period to which we now refer as the years of stagnation, this was a reckless venture. But Abuladze went on shooting it, believing that the time would come when his picture would find a way to the public. It was made in a single copy, on a videocassette. Today, the film *Repentance* has been seen in this country and abroad by millions of people. It has produced a strong impression on the public, not only as an act of the director's personal courage, but also as an artistic creation, throwing light on our recent history.

Last summer I visited the hero-city of Sevastopol. While on a sight-seeing tour, the guide took us to the foothills of Mt. Sapun. Here, in the southern part of the Crimean peninsula, many Soviet seamen were killed defending the city during the Second World War. On our way back, the guide showed me a valley.

"People who were in the war together meet here every year. We don't know them, but we take care not to bother them by taking tourists around. They probably look back upon their war experience and tell each other about themselves. Before they leave, they make an inscription with pebbles: "Onwards for the Motherland, not a step back!"

"Are there many of them?"

"Fewer each year."

Overcome with emotion, I got out of the car. I stood there for some time, looking at the mountain slopes, blood-crimson in the rays of the setting sun, and then walked slowly down into the valley. In the

distance I saw the figure of a man. I wanted to go back, but all of a sudden the man rose to his full height and stared at me. I could make out an empty shirt-sleeve. I went up to the old soldier. Beneath his feet was seen the beginning of the inscription, "Onwards for the Motherland...". Without a word I crouched down beside him and began to lay out the pebbles.

LIFE HERE OR HEREAFTER?

I look at a respectable grey-haired old man with interest. He's slow-moving, deliberate and his eyes radiate good humour. Stretching before us is a panoramic view of the old part of Budapest. We look at the architecture of the St. Mathias Church and of the ancient Dominican monastery. A brief rendezvous with eternity and its timeless grandeur.

The old man is a prominent European thinker, the well-known Austrian theologian Karl Rahner. We made our acquaintance in 1984 as participants in the International Conference "Human Responsibility in the Modern World". Participating in the conference were Marxist specialists on religion and leading theologians from Europe and Asia. It was a long and gruelling debate, a search for dialogue.

I try to make Rahner talk during an interval between sessions. A theological thinker, an author of dozens of writings, he is sure to have his own view of the "lost personality"—the global phenomenon of our times. At the morning session, Rahner spoke of man's inner depths, which are still unknown. Man is a particle of the Universe, and as such, he is steadily unfolding some incomprehensible and grandiose programme.

I recall Teilhard de Chardin, a prominent French

religious humanist, who believed that the beginnings of thinking matter on Earth could not have been the result of a happy accident. And hence, life has a specific meaning. But what kind of meaning? In Chardin's view, evolution reveals a plan of creation, invisible to the human mind. In his book *The Phenomenon of Man*, he unfolds the following hypothetical picture: supposing there is some Martian, capable of reading celestial radiations, watching our planet, it is not the blue of the seas or the green of the forests that would strike him. What would it be then? The phosphorescence of thought... Mankind has accumulated an intellectual wealth; the planet Earth has become enveloped in a "thinking layer", an ocean of images, codes and revelations. The once-dead matter has now assumed a new dimension. The glare of thought has closed around the planet.

It is not the first time that mankind has become aware of its intellectuality, of the value contained in the canopy woven from truths, ideals and inspirations. I tell Rahner that Chardin's idea of creating an ocean of intellectual wealth round the Earth as one of mankind's goals has been recognized in my country. Vladimir Vernadsky, the outstanding Soviet scientist whose works have been translated into many foreign languages, suggested that this canopy be termed as the "Noosphere" (from the Greek *nóos*—intellect). At present, this term has been adopted worldwide.

The idea of the noosphere unites mankind. But I can't help asking Rahner whether this concept fits into the overall theological picture of the Universe. It puzzles me because according to religious philosophy man's life on Earth has no meaning of its own, being governed by a much more significant, sacred purpose. This being the case, what's the point in creating mankind's spiritual wealth?

This leads to an argument. The traditional religious philosophy advocates a concept of life, which can be explained in terms of the supernatural and the eternal. According to this, eternal salvation is not to be found in the finite earthly existence. Beyond the earthly existence there is another, infinite and possibly blessed heavenly life. There were times when the church generally advocated contempt towards earthly pleasures. But things are different now. It is no longer possible to keep theology attractive by belittling the significance of earthly life. This is the reason why quite a few modern religious concepts feature ideas emphasizing the purposefulness of human life. Chardin evidently held that mankind as a whole is creating spiritual values of a special kind.

Is there a way of safeguarding the spiritual shroud? And is it really all that valuable without man? Won't the development of the world become the greatest drama, possessing a single flaw: there'll be no one to play the leading role. The starry skies above us may become a silent witness to the dissolution and disintegration of the spirit. To build up the power of spiritual energy, man must survive. It is in man, and not in repositories of spirituality, or in the depths of the spirit, that the solution to the problem lies.

Chardin's hidden train of thought is clear. He seems to be denying his own responsibility for the future of the world. Social existence may fade away and machines and technologies may bring about self-destruction. But the thinking spirit must not be extinguished, just as the pace of the cosmic evolution must not be stopped. Having assumed the dimensions of global pathos, this philosophy implicates boundless despair.

We are standing in front of an engraving *The Pilgrim's Progress from This World to That Which Is to Come*. It features a laughing man, whose foot is

dangling over a precipice. He uses his walking stick to throw down stones from under his feet. The picture is subtitled *An Atheist.*

"Just as your doctrine rules out a religious world view," says Rahner, "it renounces the age-old values accumulated by mankind."

"Does it really follow from our doctrine?"

"Naturally. You don't believe in anything, do you? So, it's the logical sequel of your lack of faith."

"Lack of faith? Does our doctrine advocate total disbelief?"

"But you do reject God, don't you?"

"Wait a moment. It was Kant who said there were two kinds of prejudice: not to believe anything and to believe everything you hear. Both ways are faulty."

"Does that mean you profess a creed?"

"Yes. It is faith that fuels human life. Without it, it is not possible either to understand the human origin, or to perceive the developments that are yet to come".

"You reason like a diligent parishioner."

"I appreciate your irony. But you mustn't excommunicate Marxists from faith. We have faith in the power of intellect. In man's cognitive faculties. We believe that human reason will discover still more amazing things in nature. Incidentally, here I quote Lenin, my great compatriot. We have faith in the inexhaustible creative faculties of people. In the conquest of outer space. In the triumph of man's untiring spirit. In the spirituality of eternal values."

"Wait! Where do those eternal values come from? In fact, it is religion alone that is capable of being the true custodian of spiritual absolutes and sacred things. But you keep renouncing these values..."

At this moment we part, never to meet again. Soon after my return to Moscow, I come across a report about Karl Rahner's death. As I write these lines, I

keep thinking about my opponent, and about the dialogue we had in front of that picture. And I can't help (by way of bringing up the unused arguments) turning to the processes under way in my country, including today's relationships between believers and atheists. Those Soviet citizens who profess religious beliefs do naturally adhere to the theological version of the meaning of life, but they are also concerned with earthly issues. Believers are taking part in reforming our life.

I also think that faith does not necessarily belong to the realm of religion. It may originate from human conviction in the wisdom of the Universe, in the appropriateness of what is going on. In the long run, faith is a conviction in the correctness of ideas, which according to Karl Marx "have conquered our intellect and taken possession of our minds, ideas to which reason has fettered our conscience, are chains from which one cannot free oneself without a broken heart..."[1]

True, total lack of faith gives rise to the most absurd creeds. A broad range of superstitions and salvation theories, propagated by preaching pilgrims, therapists, poets and prophets, enter into most incredible combinations of vogue, success and oblivion, and create a motley picture. On the other hand, one cannot possibly accept Rahner's views that any faith has an analogy with religious faith, if considered from a psychological rather than a cognitive angle, without questioning its substance, correctness and objectivity. Any faith can lead to either truth or falsehood. Just as it is capable of breathing new life into man, it can deprive him of his true self. Man can hide his own nature and origin from himself, and

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[1] K. Marx, F. Engels, *Coll. Works*, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 1975, Vol. 1, p. 221.

squeeze his consciousness dry, just as he can use faith to become his own self again.

Faith has at all times accompanied man. It embodies man's conviction in the correctness of his own world view. Historically, however, faith is normally associated with a psychological condition that presupposes divinity. It is true that we Marxists consider that on the whole religion produces a distorted world view. But at the same time it attempts to meet man's spiritual requirements. On the other hand, the attraction of atheism is not at all in its renunciation of ideals. Disbelief, lack of moral principles, elevating truths and humanistic pathos, are uncreative: these can only bring devastation.

So, the meaning of life to a religious thinker is in serving his God, in preparing himself for the life hereafter. A different creed is born of modern technocratic illusions.

Seemingly, the technocrats suggest a clear-cut and irrefutable pattern of human existence. Man is simply striving for pleasure. He seeks happiness in the enjoyment of all that life can offer: in eating and dressing well, in constantly increasing his demands. The meaning of life is, therefore, in maximum enjoyment.

...According to a newspaper legend, Hugh Hefner, as a young reporter, demanded that his weekly wages be raised five dollars. His request having been denied, Hefner left the editor's office, saying he would start his own edition, which would become a "life manual" to millions of people. Hefner did start a magazine—the famous *Playboy*—which gained popularity outside the Western world as well.

Where does the success of the enterprising publisher lie? The best explanation has so far been given by Jacques Mousseau, a French sociologist. In his book *Cinq dollars pour un empire. Le phénomène "Playboy"*, he tells the story of Hefner's achievement.

I'm sitting in Mousseau's apartment, looking through the material he used while writing his book. He shows me diagrams, statistical accounts, slides. The front wall of his study is lined with snapshots of jolly bunny-girls in skin-tight leotards, fashionable interiors and window displays of grand exhibitions.

"The whole thing is brilliantly ingenious!" exclaims Mousseau. "To think that it was as far back as 1928 that Bernays, a prominent American advertizing theoretician, recommended publishers to make widespread use of camouflaged persuasion techniques. He urged them to advertize beautiful commodities and technological breakthroughs. His advice was not given a second thought, however. A quarter of a century went by, before Hefner was able to implement those behests in mass media practice."

"Do you mean to say that Hefner merely revived long-forgotten advertizing techniques?"

"Without question, yes. The mass media tycoons thought that publicity could only be effective through the written word. But doesn't a picture leave an imprint on the human consciousness? Or a commodity, if it looks attractive?"

"Undoubtedly so... It would be naive to assume, however, that Hefner simply happened to remember something that had long been forgotten by others. Does this alone make the '*Playboy* phenomenon'?"

"It does! Hefner is an exemplary entrepreneur."

No, I can't agree with Mousseau. It naturally goes without saying that human consciousness is apt to be influenced by the surrounding reality. Any particular way of life moulds definite standards of behaviour and thinking. A pharaoh's pyramid in Ancient Egypt was not merely a royal tomb. Its massive structure inspired an impression of the inviolability of the ruler's might. From times immemorial, the Church has exerted influence over man other than by word of

mouth. A cathedral inspires reverence in the congregation by its exterior and interior decor, and this is reinforced by religious music. Before the preacher reads his sermon, the congregation's consciousness has already been tuned-in to spiritually. In the Middle Ages, members of royalty used ceremonial processions of horsemen and carriages in order to demonstrate their splendour in front of their subjects. Great significance was placed on symbols by the Nazis, whose leaders' public addresses were accompanied by torch-light processions and the great music of Wagner which created an ecstatic atmosphere.

Nonetheless, the reason underlying Hefner's success was not that he had figured out the possibilities of advertizing, as Mousseau would have it. The source of *Playboy*'s phenomenal popularity is different: Hefner was among the first to realize that a *drastic change in moral principles had taken place within American society by the mid-1950s.* The old values were fading out, whereas new ones had not yet become widespread. Hefner reckoned that new ideals might find a market. So, he began to advertize them.

Of course, we know that hedonistic principles were not born of modern consumer demands, but go back to much earlier times. However, it would be wrong to assume that the pleasure-seeking philosophy has accompanied man at all times. We have already spoken about stoicism, which contrasted the theological and the hedonistic outlooks by giving priority to different values, such as the renunciation of the desires of flesh, elevation of the spirit and self-denial. Any ethical principles ever established by great religious thinkers, philosophers and scientists have been concerned with restraining exaggerated material wants and bodily desires. Christian love towards fellowmen is incompatible with the unrestrained satisfaction of natural impulses, as is the ancient Hindu

principle of Ahimsa (non-violence). Buddhist ethics share similar views.

One may recall Plato's tradition, and also Diogenes, the Greek philosopher of the Cynic school, whose aim was to find happiness and contentment in reducing one's wants to a minimum. Immanuel Kant's central maxim also gravitates towards specific stoicism, by claiming that personal conduct should be based on principles that would be equally acceptable to any other individual who finds himself in similar circumstances.

In particular, "forced asceticism" is found in the ideology of medieval West European Christian sects. These established the norms of the so-called economic ethics, proposing the renunciation of sensuous enjoyment. The Protestant religious-ethical disciplinary system inculcated in man such moral values as diligence, thrift and prudence. Had the early-stage capitalist been socially and psychologically orientated towards pleasure-seeking ethics, capitalism would have never emerged as an economic formation. Indeed, it is impossible to imagine an entrepreneur, who makes money in the daytime merely to blow it all in the evening.

According to early bourgeois ethics, work was regarded as the aim and ambition in life. The words of Paul, the Apostle, "If any would not work, neither should he eat," have become a customary and imperative prescription. If man of property does not work, he will not eat either. Multiplication of wealth becomes the capitalist's "professional calling". He is a stranger to ostentatious luxury and extravagance; nor does he seek the outward expression of the respect that he in fact enjoys in society.

Early bourgeois ethics is built above all on profit-making, on making more and more money, while abstaining from the pleasures that money can bring.

Profit-making is an end in itself; it seems to be "abstracted" from the happiness and contentment of the individual. It is no longer by accumulating wealth that man satisfies his material wants; man's entire existence is governed by wealth-gaining, which now becomes the chief purpose in his life.

Marx and Engels debated the statement that there were "eternal truths, such as Freedom, Justice, etc., that are common to all states of society". They exposed the distorting effect that money had upon the formation of concrete moral values, such as the attitude to work, women, wealth and material wants. At the same time, they revealed the historical and cultural factors that lead to a change of ideals, traditions and absolutes.

Every thing has its own utilitarian purpose. We put on shoes to keep our feet warm. We put on a raincoat to protect ourselves from the rain and wind. In so doing, we satisfy direct and justified needs.

Let's have a look inside the sitting-room of a Victorian home. There is a great clock hung on the wall. Its purpose is to indicate the time. But the businessman who owns the house is hardly ever there. He works in his office. This brings pocket watches, and later on, wrist watches into fashion. Whatever the modification, however, a clock or a watch basically performs a singular function: they are time-indicating devices, serving a human need. But suppose an individual who already owns a watch buys a different one, which being gold-plated, looks much smarter. We have there one more function, which we may refer to as aesthetic.

As more and more commodities are brought into the market, they begin to perform additional functions: some commodities are no longer bought because of utilitarian considerations. A commodity may be bought for the sole reason of being indicative

of a specific social class. An individual will, for example, buy the latest make of a car, not because he doesn't own a car but because many people within his social circle have already bought themselves this new model. This kind of consumption has been termed by sociologists as "status-bound".

Thus, the capitalist economy, orientated towards the multiplication of commodity supply, itself undermines ascetic ethics. Man becomes a slave to exaggerated needs. "Private property does not know how to change crude need into human need. Its *idealism* is *fantasy, caprice* and *whim*..." In other words, changes occur within the very system of values.

Upholders of temperance views strived to transform life and to make the world better. Production called for the utmost mobilization of human resources. The industrialists, therefore, tended towards self-restriction. Spontaneity, all-permissiveness and egoistic impulses put them in fear. Radical in economic ventures, the bourgeoisie was (and to a certain degree continues to be) conservative in handling matters of morality and culture.

The objective tendencies in capitalism's development led to the collapse of traditional norms and standards. The economy could no longer progress along the same lines. Advancements in science and technology brought about an abundance of cheap marketable goods. But the buyers did not rush to take advantage of the situation, for they were still governed by the principles of Protestant ethics.

Having entered the state-monopoly phase, however, capitalism could not promote development on that basis any more. Producers had to urge buyers into making more and more purchases, because otherwise production costs would not be justified and the economic process would be disrupted. This brought about the emergence of the Keynesian

theory, which proposed the all-out encouragement and stimulation of buyers' demand. Traditional values had been eroded to the extent that labour and wealth accumulation ceased to be an end in themselves and were converted into a *means* of satisfying material needs and the desire for entertainment.

A neo-hedonistic theory, which attempts to give comprehensive explanation of the meaning of human life, has been vigorously promoted in the West over the past several decades. It is now possible to sum up some of the results of its propagation. The Epicurean philosophy, that was so artfully introduced by Hefner, has probably been implemented most consistently in Sweden which has attained the highest consumer standard. It is also the country where the so-called sexual revolution has assumed an unprecedented scale.

At the same time, however, Sweden has astounded the world by showing the highest suicide rate. The man who has found happiness in consumerism, paradoxically takes his own life... But is it really so bad to lead a life full of sensuous enjoyment? It is, according to many Western thinkers today, who have become increasingly aware of the social diseases within the consumer society.

What is thought about it in my country? Above all, we consider that mankind's search for new alternatives is unthinkable without analyzing the social practice that has been introduced by socialism. All the more so since our society came into existence exactly by way of criticizing the vices of bourgeois society. Many Western thinkers today recognize the theoretical consistency of such criticism. The task is now to think over the alternatives which confront mankind today.

Vast amounts of people are nowadays showing an interest in intellectual independence, in understand-

ing existing moral values. The urge felt by the masses, by mankind as a whole, for *socially-motivated conduct, for new political thinking* is becoming increasingly acute. Today there is a demand for the convincing power of logic and humanitarian values.

WHAT ARE WE?

"What are we? Where do we come from? Where are we going?" Let us ask these questions again. Over the long span of his creative life, up until his death in the early 1980s, Erich Fromm, the patriarch of American philosophy, had been trying to find the answers. We exchanged letters a few times. The keynote of Fromm's philosophical reflections was a tormenting and intense attempt to penetrate into the enigma of man. By rejecting or correcting various other attempts at solving this riddle, Fromm always emphasized the intrinsic tragedy of this subject. He goes further by trying to define the fundamental qualities of the individual in order to answer the question: "Is man a God or a monster?"

The philosophical anthropologists revealed man's biological unsettledness. The existentialists showed the tragedy of his social being. Man found himself plunged into an outlandish situation. What was he to rely upon? Must he move towards his original biological self, or, on the contrary, must he realize

himself by becoming involved in social bonds? In trying to reconcile these two positions, Fromm further aggravated the problem, by demonstrating its hopelessness.

It should be admitted, however, that Fromm's conclusions did not bring us a final verdict. It follows from his theory that man can be God and monster, prophet and fool, hero and villain, soldier and coward, humanitarian and killer. According to Fromm, "human nature" cannot be defined by way of identifying some sort of stable basis, but by formulating the symptomatic and highly dramatized contradiction inherent in human existence—including the intellectual, the psychological and the biological aspects.

True, man remains part of nature; he is inalienable from it. The sternness and the beauty of nature was described by Ernest Hemingway in his short masterpiece *The Old Man and the Sea*. In it, the old man treats his prey, the great fish, as an equal. Man lives under the dictates of nature's stern and merciless laws. But at the same time, man is aware that he is launched into this world, at a random place and time, and he realizes the brevity of his earthly existence. There is a kind of curse hanging over him: man will never free himself from that contradiction. He cannot escape from his own thoughts and sentiments, which penetrate his whole inner self.

So, why do I value Fromm and his concept of the meaning of life and humanism? Taking a tragic view on man, Fromm was nonetheless convinced that the root of all evil should be sought within "sick society", within those forms of its development, which he thought were prone to historical change. He didn't bring a verdict on the "thinking reed", and he repudiated the merciless dictum of Fate. Fromm turned to those values and ideals that were free from the power of money, profit-making and exploitation.

But how can these values be found? Where will the spiritualizing ideals come from? In corresponding with Fromm, I kept a careful track of the spiritual search that was going on in the West. For we Soviet philosophers also think about these problems. At all levels of our life, starting from its primary social unit, the family, and ending in international negotiations, we witness, or take part in clashes of conflicting views, positions and ways of life, in which the logic of parents is countered by the logic of children, the judgement of leaders by the judgement of ordinary citizens, the conviction of some countries by the conviction of other countries. Is there a global truth, on which the survival of mankind is hinged?

There is. But it can only be sought along the lines of a peaceful, carefully-considered solution to any family, social or international conflict. There is no alternative, for otherwise mankind will become entangled in the intricacies of numerous illusions, some of which may turn out to be lethal.

By what criterion should we judge conflicting tendencies, regional and group interests? I think we have such a criterion. It correlates with the facts and the laws governing the history of mankind. Admittedly, the realization of being part of a cosmic scheme does not come easily to man. The Greeks referred to anyone who did not belong to their community as "barbarians". The mentality which divides the world into "friends" and "foes" goes back to ancient times. A religion, known as Manichaeism, was founded in 3rd century Persia, and quickly spread across many countries, from Italy to China. It saw the world as hopelessly divided into two extremes—Divine Spirit and Evil.

Indeed, there is much good and much evil in the world, and they are set against one another. This conflict, however, is in no way fatal. In the first place,

there are many intermediate stages between the two extremes, which are difficult to classify as either one or the other. Secondly, these two principles are quite fluid. Good may be fraught with bitter losses; pain and cruelty may give rise to benevolence. Finally, and most importantly, the confrontation of good and evil need not necessarily end in a global catastrophe, as the Manicheans would have it.

Regretfully, the Manichaeistic world view spread beyond the confines of the ancient Persian religion. It has been accompanying mankind for many centuries. Out of sheer habit, people got used to making judgements about the surrounding reality from the point of view of "us" and "them". "Us" is the incarnation of reason, harmony, motivated conduct and benevolence, whereas "them" is the personification of evil, absurdity, unmotivated and fatal behaviour.

Thus, the significance of the West has for centuries been exalted in the European consciousness. The medieval crusades and travels, which prepared the ground for the geographical discoveries of the Renaissance; the seizure of hitherto unknown lands and cruel colonial wars—all this, in the long run, was the embodiment in real historical actions of a single Eurocentric idea, by which Europe, i.e. the West, with its traditional ways, policies, religion, culture and arts, represented the unique and unqualified value, in contrast with the "inadequacy" and "immaturity" of the rest of the world.

In the Middle Ages, when Europe's economic, political and cultural ties with other countries of the world witnessed a sharp recession, and religion became the governing factor in spiritual and political life, the notion of "the Orient" lost its significance in the European's mind, being something very remote and exotic.

The thinkers of the Enlightenment were confronted

by a diversity of human preferences and cultural standards. They believed, however, that non-European nations were living through a period which was already in Europe's past, and that they would inevitably arrive at the point in social dynamics from which the Europeans would be departing as they advanced into the future.

The idea to which Voltaire, Montesquieu and Herder applied their intellectual talents, concerning the gradual commitment of the world nations to a "world history", finally led to identifying an important area of research—the search for an incipient universal culture. It gave rise to a hypothesis that at the dawn of civilization, different nations had no intellectual and religious distinctions. They had common roots, but with time, their common culture ramified into numerous self-sustained trends.

These conjectures by the 18th century European thinkers served to fortify the Eurocentric standpoint. It implied that at certain points in its history, Europe had absorbed from the East whatever values the latter could give. Moreover, a hypothesis took shape, suggesting that the nomadic Indo-European tribes had, at the dawn of history, invaded China, India and the West from Central Asia. This encounter of different cultures allegedly gave birth to a specific European civilization, enriched by contacts with various religions and mystical creeds.

It seems paradoxical, but the 19th century and even the early 20th century philosophers used the term "European mankind". Many of them believed the West to be the birthplace of a unique culture and technological civilization, which represented the future of the human race. As for the East, it was regarded as an "underdeveloped West". This makes a good background for understanding the significance of the contribution Karl Marx made to the cogni-

zance of the major paths of mankind's historical progress.

Marx revealed that the development of industries and the promotion of economic ties bring about a merging of cultures, which leads to the consolidation of mankind. Mankind's supreme task is, therefore, to perceive the objective logic of the economic evolution. This leads to the conclusion that Marx did not see the historic mission of the proletariat as world domination; its mission, he believed, was to create a global civilization.

A colloquium was held in Montreal in 1983 dedicated to the memory of Karl Marx, in connection with the 100th anniversary of his death. One of the speakers, the Jerusalem philosopher Shlomo Avineri, pointed out the substantial impact Marxism had upon modern development. But he also said that Marx was a typical Eurocentrist. A sharp debate ensued, to which I also contributed.

Neither Marx nor Engels ever believed Europe to be the only place in the world to host the development of true scientific, artistic, philosophical and literary values. On the contrary, they showed great interest in world history with all its diversity. That is why they studied the Asian mode of production and the cultural peculiarities of the Oriental peoples. Marx and Engels maintained that the fruit of cultural activity of individual nations would become universal property. Their views can therefore be used as a basis for criticizing both Eurocentrism and concepts of the cultural supremacy of other nations or regions of the world.

According to Avineri, Marx' interest was exclusively connected with Europe. That's not true. As far back as the 1850s, Marx turned a watchful eye to the developments in the United States, India and China. He took a great interest in Russia. While living and

working in Britain, he made a careful study of the Irish problem, maintaining that the total national liberation of Ireland was an essential condition for the social emancipation of Britain's entire working class. Marx also analyzed Indian history, going into detail about peasants' uprisings in the country's various regions, and also the Tai-ping rebellion in China.

The Marxist concept of the integrity of world history does not in any way entail levelling or rejecting, as being of secondary importance, the great diversity of real-life situations that history offers to a researcher. Marxists display a natural interest in studying local historical processes, that is, the offshoots of the overall social process. A vigorous process is now under way, whereby the numerous cultural traditions are being drawn closer together and merged, giving rise to internationalist tendencies, which are bound to enrich world culture.

Vladimir Lenin expressed an extremely profound idea about the primacy of social development and the values common to mankind over the interests of a particular social class. In this nuclear age, the significance of that idea becomes especially poignant. Viewed from a spaceship, our planet does not look like a huge celestial body. It is small, and possibly the only source of intelligent life in the Universe. Although mankind is divided into civilizations and cultures, it has remained a single whole all the same...

Marxists are trying to perceive this antagonistic world as an interrelated and integral entity. This idea goes back to Lenin. "To be an internationalist Social-Democrat," he said, "one must *not* think only of one's own nation, but place *above it* the interests of all nations...[1]" He said this at a time when the

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 22, p. 347.

majority of philosophers and politicians regarded the concept of world history as some sort of lofty abstraction, having no practical application in the socially-divided world.

The drastic class-based differences and the historical confrontation between two socio-economic systems do not rule out, but rather presuppose the intricate dynamics of their interaction. The philosophical perception of modern times allows neither for denying the fundamental antithesis between the two formations, nor for ignoring the essential unity of mankind, its common interests and values.

Contrary to the predictions of many sociologists concerning the inevitability of a historic conflict between capitalism and socialism, we hold a different view. Marx expressed a conviction that "the historical development of the antagonisms, immanent in a given form of production, is the only way in which that form of production can be dissolved and a new form established"[1]. This implies that the fundamental processes in any particular country are dependent above all on internal, and not external, antagonisms, and that the people themselves determine the social future of their country. The people, and nothing else.

There's no denying that each of the two social systems exerts a definite influence upon the other. For example, the model of social development, devoid of exploitation, unemployment and poverty, inspired a number of capitalist-orientated countries to switch over to socialist lines of development. This has narrowed the sphere and influence of capitalism upon the world processes, and continues to do so. On the other hand, the arms race has forced the Soviet Union and other socialist countries to enhance their

[1] K. Marx, *Capital*, Progress, 1974, Vol. 1, p. 458.

defence, incurring huge military expenditure—instead of allocating this money for peaceful purposes. This also hampers the immanent potentialities of socialism, hindering its progress. The mutual confrontation, however, has its positive impacts: the scientific and technological successes of one side stimulate the other to progress, ensuring that both of them avoid sluggishness and conservatism.

Meanwhile, no influence or interaction is capable of changing the general laws governing the development of either system or the mode of their development. This has been corroborated by the sizeable experience of the relations between capitalism and socialism. Neither military intervention, nor economic blockade, nor trading embargoes could hold back the historical advancement of the socialist state born of October 1917; and what is more, new countries have started following in its wake. It is not an accident, but a historical law, which should be realized and accepted. Socialism is logical and irreversible to the same degree as was capitalism when it emerged to replace feudalism. The new social system does not interrupt the historical tendency for the internationalization of the world economy; moreover, it continues and extends the tendency.

A sound scientific approach is needed today more than ever before. Any attempt to hold back the march of history and violate laws of its development is fraught with countless misfortunes to mankind. We are aware that capitalism has not yet exhausted its historical possibilities. But neither has socialism fully revealed its potential. The only sensible alternative in this situation is peaceful competition between the two differing systems in an atmosphere of reciprocity, cooperation and goodneighbourliness.

Lenin said: "I know of no reason why a socialistic commonwealth like ours cannot do business indefi-

nitely with capitalistic countries."[1] We take these words as a behest. He was right many times over, with reference to today, when the global problems of the modern world demand a global way of handling them. This approach suggests constructive cooperation between countries and nations, for the sake of the survival of civilization.

The same approach will enable every nation to cope with its individual domestic problems—everybody has them.

The purpose of the revolutionary process of perestroika in the Soviet Union is to raise society to a higher level of development, and to initiate qualitative changes based on socialist values, the values common to all mankind. The word "perestroika" does not need translation now, not only because of the great international interest in our domestic affairs, but also because the whole world is in need of it. People want to know: what kind of life will they go on living?

We are trying to enrich humanity with new values today. The objective of the preservation of the human race on Earth is indisputable to us. We want to reveal the true essence of humanism, to emphasize the significance of moral principles in life of society. The formation of human values is, however, being confronted by the egoism of the reactionary forces, by the cult of crude violence and by the outdated political thinking.

MODERN APOCALYPSE

He appeared from behind my back and proffered me a handwritten page. without saying a word. I

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 42, p. 177.

skimmed over the text. A society of anxious philosophers is worried about the future of mankind... It calls public attention to the destructive mechanisms of the mind... Expert psychoanalysts are appealing to reason and consciousness...

Having sensed my embarrassment, the stranger ran his fingernail across the vacant margin and asked if we could all sign it.

This was in Boston. On that day I was taking my turn at the Soviet Literature stand. Foreign colleagues dropped in, picked up the books they wanted and discussed their views. But no one asked for signatures. Having met my questioning stare, the stranger produced a visiting card. "Ginsberg, Professor of Philosophy, USA". I asked him what he needed those signatures for. The professor got noticeably excited:

"People do not grasp the most important point. What really matters is not material damage, nor even losses in manpower. The most terrible thing is man's psyche. It is disintegrating. the deep subconscious processes are moulding a sinister personality."

"Aren't peace campaigners aware of that?"

"They are, but they fail to see the main link. We are creating a new movement. It will unite thinkers in various countries. It will be a Mind Protection Society."

"But war will bring total destruction. Taking care to protect the mind, should we worry about the preservation of culture?"

We suddenly found ourselves in the middle of a fierce debate. People were interrupting one another. War, catastrophe, intimidation... How could culture be saved?

On the following day I went to hear Ginsberg's lecture. It was presented in the spirit of humanism, and called for the changeover from militarism and

militance to tolerance and peace. The professor focused his lecture on the notion of "unitarian culture", i.e. a humanistic culture of "united mankind". The very idea of suppressing "alien" cultures (in particular, Ginsberg referred to the suppression of the Red Indian culture in the USA) sooner or later leads to cultural expansion, to war in its most horrible "anti-cultural" forms. When the lecture was over, Ginsberg presented his listeners with written invitations to contribute to a series of publications concerning war and peace issues.

The publications, prepared by staff at the Institute for the Arts and Humanistic Studies of the Pennsylvania State University, are on my desk. Reading through the pages, I keep thinking about how much more influence scientists have had in recent years on the mass anti-war movement. It can be briefly summed up as follows: one should be made to understand where the threat stems from—is it in man's destructive nature, or in social factors which give rise to a perverted, ill-intentioned consciousness?

The amorality of war was condemned way back in ancient times. Chroniclers have brought us Herodotus' speech at the temple of Zeus in Olympus. Among other things it states that only an insane man can welcome war, for war shatters the very logic of human existence: in times of peace children bury their parents, whereas in times of war, parents bury their children. Admittedly, the ancient philosophers speculated upon ways of avoiding violent clashes within civilized communities, by which they meant Hellas and the Roman Empire.

Erasmus of Rotterdam was the first scholar to bring up the problem of peace on a global scale. He cursed the rulers responsible for bloodshed, and the clergymen who gave their blessing to bloodshed contrary to Christ's commandments.

Immanuel Kant went much further than that. He thought everlasting peace would be attained not simply through the volition of good rulers, but through impersonal forces, acting independently of human will. If mankind does not make peace without wars, said Kant, extermination techniques will lead it into a peace of entirely different kind, the peace of graveyard silence. Nonetheless, there was a note of consolation, albeit a faint one, in Kant's theorizing: he was convinced that life would survive, if not on Earth, on the other planets within the solar system (which he believed to be populated with living beings).

"And what if our planet is the only island amid the ocean of cosmic silence?" suggested Arthur Schopenhauer. This proposition by a pessimistic philosopher has been corroborated by modern science: there is no evidence of any other inhabited planet either within the solar system, or within other, much more remote galaxies. Observations by powerful electronic telescopes and radars have so far produced only negative results.

To think that in the course of its existence Earth itself could have shared the fate of its lifeless neighbours—Venus and Mars! About four and a half billion years ago, when our planet's atmosphere was forming, only five degrees centigrade separated it from the so-called "greenhouse effect", which turned Venus into a boiling hell. Two million years later, the Earth could have become a cosmic iceberg, for it was only one degree away from totally freezing-up, like Mars.

So, today people are capable of doing what Nature failed to do. Horrible terms have come into everyday use, such as "megadeath", meaning one million deaths, used as a unit in reference to nuclear warfare (in analogy with "megaton"—the explosive force of a

nuclear charge equivalent to that of a million tons of TNT). With electronic infallibility, computers corroborate the scientific supposition that our planet will not survive a global thermonuclear war.

This realization alone increases the value of the earthly concepts of the Universe. Meanwhile, military clashes, economic and financial crises, the irresponsible aggressiveness of fascists and militarists have undermined the faith of many thinkers who stopped believing in the objective character of the world's historical development. Their irrational philosophy found expression in a formula suggested by Raymond Aron, an exponent of Western social science: history is a blank page to be filled by anyone at his own will.

Marxists reject this view. They see history as a process determined by the general laws of social development. But they do not object to its pages being "filled" by anyone according to his tastes and understanding. What matters is to come to an agreement on the fundamental issue: the "blank page" of history should be filled in such a way that history could continue.

Therefore we all should realize that despite our differences, we remain to be children of the same Mother-Earth, and that it is our duty to preserve the life she has endowed us with. So let us voice our concern for the burning problems of today, and seek peaceful solutions to them; let us awaken the conscience and responsibility of every individual for the future of all. People throughout the world are worried about the nuclear threat—it has become our common concern, regardless of where we live, what ideology we profess and what creed we belong to.

In this nuclear age, is is high time we discarded the mentality of the Stone Age, when disputes were resolved by means of a cudgel or stone-axe.

20th-century man has discovered the formula of total death. And 20th-century man must return the formula of life to mankind or become extinct.

To say that the responsibility of the present generation is great is a gross understatement. History has handed us the keys to its past and its future. Whether or not we relay the material and spiritual gains to the grateful future generations depends solely on us. Otherwise, there will be no one to mourn over our graves, or to bring a curse upon our ashes. Isn't it time while it is still not too late for everybody to realize that no political or philosophical differences are worth the risk of self-extermination? The times of "crusades" against dissidents are over. This realization must become the flesh and blood of our civilization.

Meanwhile the war threat remains real. It is affecting the human mind. When was the connection between a war threat and mass-scale neurotic disorders first established? It was probably done by Sigmund Freud. The Austrian scientist believed that the source of impending catastrophe was rooted in man's vile nature. The First World War shattered any illusions about the saneness of the Son of Nature. How can one count upon the wisdom of man when he is literally craving for destruction and fratricide? It was not the unprincipled careerists or corrupted politicians who triggered the war. Had man possessed common sense, he would not have been dragged into that butchery.

It is known, however, that the overwhelming majority of psychoanalysts refused to accept those late Freudian theories. They associated them not with psychology, but rather with those ideas in natural philosophy, which could neither be proved, nor refuted. While Freud's disciples were arguing over the theories advanced by their teacher, the mass media

came up with a stunning discovery: it turned out that people were living under the utmost psychological strain. Fearful images filled their consciousness. Once the release mechanism was activated—a torrent of incredible, sinister visions would overflow the mass consciousness. The consequences of the mounting strain brought on by overwhelming fear were unpredictable.

Almost a year before the Second World War, the American director and actor Orson Welles decided to stage a radio play based on H. G. Wells' novel *The War of the Worlds*. To make it sound "live", and thus to give the action greater dynamism, the director transferred the play's setting to the United States.

The play began with a normal-style news broadcast. Among other items, the announcer told the audience about an unidentified flying object, which had taken off from Mars and was approaching the Earth. This piece of information was soon embellished with plenty of detail, for astronomers immediately set out to monitor the unusual flight. After a short musical intermission, the announcer told his listeners excitedly that the mysterious object had reached the Earth. There, it had touched ground! Then, another character, the "President", spoke into the microphone, urging his countrymen not to get excited and to stand by their radio sets. The tension mounted as more news was relayed from the object's landing site. The reporter could see the hatch-door fall open, and huge monsters on tripods emerge from the flying apparatus. These were Martians. One of them walked towards the transmitting station. The reporter's voice dropped dead abruptly, as if the man was being strangled by the monster. A tormenting pause followed...

What happened the next moment was that thousands of listeners, having taken the make-believe

for the real thing, rushed out of their apartments and run along the ocean coast, in fear of the Martians. Nobody wanted a terrible encounter.

After the panic was over, some prominent American psychologists tried to investigate the incident, in an attempt to understand what made the sober-minded listeners take an act for a real event. Is man really incapable of distinguishing between fact and fantasy? The psychologists concluded that in a situation of utmost strain, people can fall prey to any hypnotic suggestion, including a most incredible one. Anyway, the atmosphere that filled the prewar years was full of anxiety, rumours and menace. Had that not been the reason why the "Martian put-on" produced so great an effect?

This incident, which has long since gone into the annals, did not only cause unrest among the psychoanalysts. It showed that man's inner anxiety and troubled state of mind could be used for a specific purpose. The demons secreted in the human subconsciousness could be released... One need only comprehend the nature of the fears and mould them into the desired corporeality.

So, numerous prophets are today trying to unfold a picture of imminent Apocalypse before their adherents. Scorched land. The torments of hell. And a special punishment for those who remain oblivious, who feel albeit a minor doubt about the extinction of mankind. The sceptics will get the heaviest punishment.

Does it mean one should not give any warnings? One certainly should. It is important, however, to distinguish between deliberate, conscious attempts to instill fear and a sober assessment of the situation. Meanwhile, the fear, being a sequel to the nuclear build-up, is in itself capable of causing fanatic blindness, including an unrestrained desire for self-extermination.

The Pentagon is going to spend a trillion dollars on SDI. To make this new stupidity record, about a million dollars has to be spent every day over the next 2,730 years. And this has to be done while about 44,000 people in the world (according to recent statistics) die every day of malnutrition and lack of medical aid. How is it possible to pull through projects involving such crazy wastefulness? One of the reasons for that is the unrestrained build-up of fear, i.e. the *expectation of something horrible happening*. Some descriptions of the probable aftermath of a thermonuclear war seem to be contributive to building up such a mood.

So, the misgivings voiced by Ginsberg of the USA, are not without ground. When phantasmagorical TV serials dominate TV screens, when one country or another becomes an arena for unheard-of calamities, one is bound to assume that the human mind is in real danger.

Of course, a broad conceptual realization of the nature of war cannot be based on the mere registration of man's self-destructive nature. What we need here is a well-substantiated social approach. Nor it is possible, however, to brush aside the mass, hallucinatory visions, which virtually ooze from some commercial productions, made to meet the demand of a considerable proportion of viewers. Is it not, in fact, a psychological preparation for the final, bloody dénouement?

Many scientists today trace the students' unrest in 1960s-1970s to the traumatic impact that the nuclear menace had upon the younger generation. Indeed, wars have at all times shattered the human mind. As long ago as in the late 1940s, a prominent American psychologist Erik Erikson wrote about the population's large-scale traumatization as sequel to the Second World War experience, while Carl Gustav

Jung noted that Europe's postwar mental health was questionable.

The younger generation's response to the war threat appears to be a mixture of excitement, intensive anti-militarism and aggressive protest. Erich Fromm, whom I mentioned earlier, said that once a war of extermination broke out, it would make no sense to discuss what proportion of the Earth's population would perish—30, 60 or 90 per cent. One doesn't need a great imagination, however, to visualize the psychological consequences of sudden large-scale destruction and the death of thousands upon thousands of Americans or Russians. What will those few survivors be confronted with? Scorched land, mountains of ashes and corpses. The paroxysms of panic, fury and despair that are bound to occur will overshadow even the mass psychoses which accompanied the epidemics of plague during the Middle Ages.

The traumatic effect of such a catastrophe would revive the most primitive instincts: the archaic elements of the human mind would break loose from under the ennobling layers of cultural acquisitions. For example, mankind has been known to practise cannibalism; couldn't this monstrous ritual be revived under the conditions of a mental catastrophe? Cruelty is a one-way road: it can produce nothing but more cruelty. It is an inescapable psychological fact.

One cannot, with impunity, peer into a "bottomless void" for too long, that is, to run a "frontline syndrome" without a war going on, or else, to live in fear of an imminent global holocaust. It is probably this nightmare of "expectation" that brings about numerous distortions and disorders in the conduct of modern man. What note must be struck by humanism today to withstand the "frontline mentality", the "bottomless void"?

Science has accumulated great empirical experience which allows us to assess human conduct against an established norm. But these observations have to do with everyday life and activities, whereas a war is not solely a total catastrophe, but also a tremendous blow on the human mind, whereby man is plunged into an incredibly extreme environment. And here, one must measure things against different standards.

Is the world living on the threshold of a war? Are newspaper lines about the imminent threat of extermination true? Like yesterday, mothers throughout the world today are pushing their prams, people are hurrying to work, and children are on their way to school. Is it conceivable that a nuclear "mushroom" could at some sudden moment wipe all this out, plunging the world into an indescribable abyss?

Specialists are familiar with the numerous studies of the aftereffects of Hiroshima bombing. These works are full of compassion towards the victims of the atomic bomb. This natural sentiment, however, prevented the writers from making professional judgements, and even more so from analyzing the psychological and social impacts produced by the catastrophe in all its complexity. Obviously, investigations of this kind run into a serious emotional obstacle. Yet, there have been reports that totally lacked emotionalism, and produced sheer statistical and medical data, e.g. information on radioactivity doses and other technicalities.

Today, the world has come to understand that the Hiroshima experience is a huge and dreadful social experiment, which makes it possible to penetrate the depths of the human mind and understand many a process underlying human behaviour. In the years that followed the Hiroshima explosion, nuclear weapons have become more sophisticated. In fact, they have been totally "perfected". Today, the ex-

perience of the nuclear explosion survivors assumes a global significance. Moreover, there emerges a need for a deeper insight into the psychology of survival in conditions of chain-like catastrophes.

Every historical crisis, as a rule, would produce leaders capable of showing other people an escape route, and suggesting a goal for existence. In this case, however, the totality of the catastrophe, its inhuman and purely technological nature prevented Hiroshima from producing such leaders. The survival from mental extinction, caused by a cataclysm, led to a new world view in the wake of the great epidemics during the Middle Ages, to give rise to movements that heralded the Reformation. Alas, today we have no right to rely on the wisdom of those who might survive a nuclear catastrophe. Hiroshima and Nagasaki have taught us all our final lesson.

Destruction is the main function of war. Of course, there have been occasions in history when a civilization, having suffered a military and economic defeat, has continued to exert a strong influence over the conquerors. Thus, the ancient Greeks, conquered by Rome, retained their tremendous cultural influence over the victors. But there will be no victors in modern war.

During the 1980s, mankind has embarked on a decisive stage in its development, to which the whole of human history offers no analogy. War was the sole reason for the collapse of various empires in the past. But it did not so far involve the future of the world, human culture in its entirety. Today, the threat of war alone affects the human mind in a most destructive way. Like the Apocalypse, the impending catastrophe upsets subconscious mental balance of man.

Meanwhile, among those who refuse to accept the prospect of self-extermination, the war threat evokes a different feeling, the feeling of solidarity

and mutual responsibility. The Soviet film *Dead Man's Letters* portrays the unparalleled ruthlessness of those, whose perverted mentality had led to a global holocaust. The film culminates in a humanistic scene, filled with lofty symbolism. Having buried their teacher, who had given them all his spiritual strength, the children leave the cellar. They go out hand in hand to meet the images of death and chaos. This is the symbol of a new human association. They are to carry on the torch of life.

NEW POLITICAL THINKING

In the middle of the last century, the League of Communists entrusted Marx and Engels with the preparation of the scientific communism policy document. The *Manifesto of the Communist Party* written in 1848 went further than laying down the Communists' goals and tactics. It contained a new world outlook. Filled with inspiring truths, the document proclaimed the lofty ideals of life, struggle, renewal and constructiveness.

Today, at the end of the millennium, people have come to a turning point, which calls for an in-depth realization of a number of world-outlook problems, the key ones being the problems of the future of civilization. The retention of the traditional mentality may prove fatal to its future.

Some people may find it strange that Communists should emphasize the primacy of universal interests and values. Indeed, the class-based approach in viewing every social phenomenon is the ABC of Marxism. This kind of approach today is still consonant with the realities of a class-divided society, as well as with the realities of international life, which bears the full impact of this confrontation. Nowadays, however,

there is a universal interest which is real and not abstract, immediate and not remote—to avert the catastrophe threatening civilization, as expounds Mikhail Gorbachev in his book *Perestroika. New Thinking for Our Country and the World.*

What will the 21st century's civilization be like? What will become of mankind? The prospects for history's future outrun the boldest imagination. During the past few decades mankind has advanced technologically farther than during the entire span of its history. Apart from the obvious benefits, however, the technological advancement is fraught with grave dangers to the present-day generation. Being has at all times run ahead of consciousness. Will human consciousness be able to catch up with the gaining realities—this is the question. Mankind's future depends on the answer. Will the human race be able to adapt itself to the rapidly changing world, to measure up to the level of a modern technological civilization, to adopt an alternative way of thinking and thus to preserve the environment and its own self within it?...

Despite its importance, technology is only one aspect of the matter. The modern world is socially sophisticated, diverse and dynamic. It is full of conflicting tendencies and drastic contradictions. There are revolutions and there is fierce resistance from those sections of society which are unwilling to part with their privileges. There are brilliant achievements in all spheres of science and art, and there is cultural degradation. There is luxury amid poverty, and there is hunger amid plentifulness. There is a powerful gravitation towards mutual confidence, and there is growing estrangement and hostility.

The civilization of the future is being conceived within the vortex of truly revolutionary changes in science, technology, culture, psychology, demography and ecology. The competition and confron-

tation between the two social systems, alongside the growing tendency for interdependence between states, reveal the dialectical complexity of today's world development. The new political thinking that we are trying to adopt is a *dialectical* thinking. It is not merely a declaration and plea, but a philosophy of action and, if you like, a philosophy of living.

Many of my foreign colleagues today recognize the value of the new political thinking. Some sources say that prior to the Communists, the idea of a universal, global thinking had been advanced by Bertrand Russel. Well, one may argue over the priority. Meanwhile the essence of the new political thinking is exactly in the recognition of the universal approach, in a movement towards the same goal from different directions.

The new political thinking is no abstract notion. It is being filled with a concrete content. Politics should be fuelled by the intellectual wealth of every particular nation and of human civilization as a whole. A policy that is not impregnated with concern for man's future is a bad, immoral policy. It is not worthy of respect.

Today's world is a world of struggle between reason and madness, morality and barbarity, life and death, within which we have clearly and unconditionally defined our position. We are on the side of reason, morality and life. This is why we are for disarmament, above all a nuclear one, for building up a global security system. *It is the only possible choice which will ensure the survival of mankind.*

Perestroika is necessary in this world satiated with nuclear weapons, a world which has serious economic and ecological problems, poverty, backwardness and disease. More and more people are coming to realize that. It is hoped that crude force in international relations will come to be replaced with

values common to mankind, the values presupposing respect for each nation's interests and for its right to make its own choices, the right to be different from other nations.

Our philosophy of humanizing international relations is based on a careful analysis of the world processes based on strict account taken of every nation's interests. Meanwhile, there are certain forces in the West which declare this philosophical world view to be utopia and try to discredit our policy. But can anything be more topical nowadays than the humanization of politics? Nuclear disarmament is, in essence, and even above all, a humanistic issue.

The general public is not only becoming increasingly aware of the need for humanizing international policies, but, what's even more important, it is becoming increasingly involved in these policies. For centuries, foreign policy-making has been the prerogative of the powers that be. Even today, it is still in many ways the privilege of government machinery. But fortunately, not in every way. The leading social tendency—a shift towards democratization—is increasingly gaining ground in the international arena.

Our time has naturally come to see an increasing role being played by universal factors in world affairs, by the human dimension in politics and by the revision of international relations from this point of view. The humanistic priorities are winning growing recognition. They are concerned not only with maintaining peace on Earth, but also with protecting the individual. It is crucial for man to be sure that his freedoms are real, that society really needs him, his work and experience, that it won't discard him in times of trouble, and that it guarantees him a certain level of welfare. This is the common denominator which unites different approaches towards the issue

of human rights, and towards the socio-humanitarian sphere as a whole.

Undoubtedly, we have reached a stage in the world situation, when we can no longer do without new political methods. This has been convincingly corroborated by the recent signing of the Soviet-American INF treaty, which has become the first step on the way to establishing a new philosophy of international relations.

Admittedly, the heavy burden of human errors and political blunders does not become lighter, as mankind becomes wiser. Moreover, in the course of historical development, this burden has openly gained weight—probably in the same proportion as human activities have grown in scale, whilst the succession of increasingly powerful and sophisticated technical novelties has proved to be fraught with formidable and extraordinary dangers. This has always been so. Our age is no exception. The tragedies of the Challenger and Chernobyl shocked the world. A previously unheard-of disaster approached the world stealthily from the very forefront of man's intellectual activity. But there is a vast historical experience to tell us that tragedies go hand in hand with human courage: to us, the Chernobyl accident meant both—the mobilization of a huge human potential and a sobering lesson.

POTENTIAL OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT

Last year I went to visit my father's grave. Several decades had gone by before I was able to do that. Long ago, during the war, my family received a sorrowful notification: "... died the death of a hero in action on the right bank of River Daugava, buried in

a common grave". Four children, myself the youngest, became orphans. There were seven thousand kilometres separating us from the place where our father had met his death. No one at that time had the faintest hope that that common grave would weather the storm.

Today, I am much older than my father was at the time of his death. So, here I am, walking down a road leading to the village of Rogas, near Riga, in the Baltic republic of Latvia. A majestic war memorial has now been erected there. It is the place where a concentration camp was built by the Nazi invaders to slaughter and torture people. Huge figures, carved in stone, are now telling their painful and bitter story to the visitors. These are symbols of suffering and agony. It is the bleeding memory of the past.

I am walking down the road, where once trenches were. The place is now covered with a growth of wild grasses. ... Soviet troops were breaking through towards Rogas in order to free the prisoners of the Nazi concentration camp, to save survivors from torture and extermination. It was here that my father took his platoon into attack and was stopped by a German bullet. The grateful memory of those who survived lives on to this day. There is a small farmstead nearby, where a tombstone has been erected with a long list of names carved on it. Those are the names of the soldiers who were first buried in a common grave and whose remains were later transferred to the village cemetery.

My generation did not take part in the war. But the war has left an indelible imprint in our souls. Soviet people emerged from the long and dreadful bloodshed, having retained their faith in man. In the struggle against the Hitlerite invaders, they renounced the laws of vengeance and destruction. In combatting anti-humaneness they fulfilled their duty to

the country, giving their lives for the sake of the generations to come.

... This young pilot had no idea that in the dogfight in the dark Moscow skies he was attacking a German ace. But he had a nasty feeling that he might not make it. I'm writing this on the basis of an analysis of that fight later carried out by expert pilots. There are diagrams, charts and the evidence of the fighter pilot. The Heinkel wouldn't let the Soviet fighter manoeuvre at close quarters. It glided away with the precision of an aerobatics performer. Admittedly, the Heinkel's right engine began to "cough" (having been hit during the first sudden attack by the Soviet fighter plane), but despite this, the intruder was still out of reach.

It was a night dogfight, in which the bomber and the fighter planes were running more or less the same chances. It was 10.55 p.m. when the Soviet fighter plane spotted the German bomber, stealthily approaching Moscow at an altitude of 4,500 m, by the flashing of its exhaust flames. It immediately attacked, and forced the German bomber to swerve back. For the next half an hour the fighter pilot tried to engage the intruder in gunfire until his plane ran out of ammunition. Only a professional dogfighter can fully appreciate the feeling of impotence at the sight of a fleeing, but unhurt and triumphant, enemy.

And then the Soviet pilot brought his plane into a ramming attack. Mentally, he calculated a trajectory from which to hit the Heinkel's stabilizer with the fighter plane's propeller. But when there were no more than fifteen metres separating the two aircraft, the Soviet pilot got hit by a bullet. His left arm hang lifeless. A precision hit was now out of the question. Having put his foot right down on the accelerator, the Soviet pilot brought the entire machine to ram the German plane.

The screech was deafening. The fighter plane turned over. Having torn away the safety belts, the pilot fell out of the blazing aircraft. He went into an 800 m free-fall jump, waiting for the flaming debris to fall past him onto the ground. He landed in a swamp. He consulted his watch. It has stopped during the collision. The hands were at 23 hours 28 minutes.

This is the account of the famous ramming attack by Soviet air force pilot Viktor Talalikhin, which happened one night in August 1941.

By the end of 1941, Hermann Goering, Commander of the German Air Force, the Luftwaffe, received a regular report about the aviation losses on the Eastern front. A special note attached to it added that there were many cases when Russian pilots would resort to ramming attacks in desperate situations. It was causing nervous tension among valiant Germany's air force aces. In answer to this, Goering's aides circulated a statement among the Luftwaffe units, whereby, to pacify the German pilots, the "unheard-of breach of warfare rules" was interpreted as a lack of combat skills.

The threat of a ramming attack, the most deadly method of air warfare, would on some occasions make a whole cluster of German bombers disperse at the mere sight of an approaching Soviet fighter plane. German pilots were perfectly aware of the "weapon" at the disposal of Soviet airmen, which had nothing to do with the level of technological sophistication, or with achievements in aircraft designing. This weapon was firmness of spirit.

Why do I recall the war years today, when the idea of peace is winning over the consciousness of every nation? Not to glorify the wartime valiance, anyway. Not even to underscore that no one except the Russians dared to use the ramming technique in

those years. The reason why I am writing all this is to reiterate that the Soviet people were defending the values which had been achieved through great suffering in the course of their preceding history, which encompassed the triumph of victories, the bitterness of defeats, the gains and the losses.

Alexander Werth, a British journalist, was born in 1901 in St. Petersburg. Having emigrated to England, he later went to Paris to take part in a programme sponsored by Columbia University. His book *Russia: Hopes and Fears* was published in 1969. The author, who had travelled extensively during his journalistic career, told the Western reader about the Soviet youngsters who built cities in the taiga during the 1930s. Werth did not belittle the heroism of the Komsomol activists, nor did he praise their creative enthusiasm. He claimed to be taking a broader view on the subject by formulating a historical verdict on the wrongs that were done. Using extensive statistical data, and economic estimations, he attempted to prove that, viewed from the angle of balanced engineering calculation, the youngsters' "venture" had been sheer madness. People worked in incredibly hard conditions. There were bad shortages of machinery and food...

I met Alexander Werth one year after the appearance of his book.

"So, you don't accept enthusiasm, unless it is backed with accurate engineering groundwork?"

"It doesn't appeal to me. I think that the meaning of life is in the living. That's my credo, if you like..."

I recalled this conversation quite recently. A youth debate was in progress at the Moscow Conservatoire Hall. The topic of the discussion had been formulated somewhat unusually: "Do we live when we're alive? Are we dead after we die?" Among other controversial issues, there sprang up the subject of

heroism. What's heroism—a momentary spark, a bright, but accidental impulse? Or, is it a whole lifetime, meaningful and worthwhile? Go into the fields on an autumn day, listen to the whisper of the great mass of golden wheat, look at the crops, tinted with silver. The heavy spikes of wheat are the graphic illustration of human accomplishment. But long before the crops can be harvested, the farmer has to worry about irrigation, machines and seeds. That's life. Any feat, even if it seems to be absolutely spontaneous, has a solid background.

...It's drizzling. It's nearly noon. We, the Soviet delegates to the 16th World Philosophical Congress, have arrived in Cologne to see the famous cathedral. "And there is one more place of interest in the city," says our guide. "Hurry, before it closes for lunch." We descend into a semi-basement. Long, damp corridors. Shopwindows. Stupefied, we look at rags, which once were uniforms, Nazi decorations, burnt and blood-stained T-shirts, pieces of cloth held together by safety pins. It's a punk shop. One can buy a razor blade here and wear it in place of a neck-tie.

"But where are the customers?" we ask the guide.

The guide throws a sour glance at the tower clock. It's 1 p.m. "The punks are still asleep at this time. They won't come into the square until night."

Western newspapers reported one day, that Elvis Presley, the American rock'n'roll superstar, had bought a personal Boeing 707 for one and a half millon dollars. He ordered it to be equipped with a gym and a sauna. Rather a high life for a 20th century Philistine, isn't it? Anyone wishing to excel Presley, will have to pay tens of millions of dollars for an orbital barber's shop, or a submarine WC. To think how much our ancestors would envy us for being able to throw cigarette butts out of a spaceship's porthole! Alas, the ideals of a "modest

and honest living", which used to provide sufficient mental comfort in the past, have begun to reveal not so much honesty and modesty, as the scarcity of spiritual energy. The propaganda is telling the Philistine, not without success: stay away from politics (which is total filth and immorality), stay away from philosophy (it's only for egg-heads). The implication behind these indoctrinations is: it's not up to you to transform life! What matters is to earn an honest living, to help your neighbours, to raise your kids. The rest is none of your business, you're not responsible for it.

I'm convinced that one of the indisputable benefits of socialism is the social involvement of the individual, the conscientiousness of the personality, the meaningfulness and spirituality of human existence. Deep personal involvement in everything going on around us is extremely helpful in the effort to accelerate the country's socio-economic and cultural advancement.

Does this mean there are no serious problems in my country? Of course, there are. Take the levelling of wages, which has considerably undermine creative enthusiasm, the stagnation in various spheres of life, the dictates of the bureaucratic machinery. It is our firm conviction, however, that the process of perestroika, which is under way in the country, will make it possible to fully reveal the true potential of socialism. We are concerned about the deformations in social orientations and in the structure of everyday values, which have taken place over recent years. The Soviet press has been recently focusing on such social quandaries as indifference and scepticism among young people, the spreading of alcoholism, drug addiction and crime.

The "no-problem" way of presenting the realities of life, which until lately was inherent in our theoret-

ical and cultural activities, had done us a very bad turn. It resulted in a drop in public morals and undermined the noble feeling of solidarity, forged during the heroic time of the October Revolution, the first five-year plan periods, the Great Patriotic War against Nazi invaders and the postwar revival. Alien stereotypes, imposing vulgarity, poor taste and lack of spirituality, increasingly began to penetrate Soviet society.

We are convinced today that *man, in his creative diversity, is the leading character of history.* The paramount task of our days is to elevate man culturally and spiritually, by respecting his inner self, and augmenting his morality. The entire intellectual potential of society, with all the opportunities offered by culture, is regarded by us as an instrument for moulding a socially-involved personality, which is spiritually rich, fair and conscientious.

The democratic process has spurred on perestroika as a whole, and made society far more aware of its problems. The purpose is to carry out a radical renewal of all aspects of the country's life, while fully utilizing the humanistic potential of the socialist system in every one of its decisive spheres—economic, socio-political and cultural.

A FEW WORDS IN CONCLUSION

Various programmes for the humanistic revival of mankind can be identified within the panorama of the modern world. Many Western philosophers see the potentialities for progress, including the humanization of society, in *technological* advancement. It is their conviction that a new wave of cultural innovations will clear away the contradictions and collisions inherent in scientific and technological prog-

ress, and will harmonize man with the rest of the world. It is hoped that social cataclysms, cultural and racial problems will be resolved with the help of computers. The modern technological revolution is therefore interpreted not only as a technological turnabout, but also as a harbinger of a totally new civilization.

There is no point in arguing over the concrete technological calculations advanced by the adherents of this viewpoint. But one should certainly be aware that many of them, in fact, disregard the subjective factor in history, and the part played by classes and social groups in history-making. It is not technology, but man that heralds the true humanistic revival.

A different viewpoint is assumed by the *neo-conservative* version of humanistic renaissance. Thinkers of this orientation are nurturing the idea of reviving the archaic forms of consciousness, which, as they see it, are capable of returning the lost firmness of spirit to mankind, along with the capacity for imagination and romantic outlook. The neo-conservatives are talking of a "spiritual revolution", by which they mean the revival of basic moral principles. The proponents of this humanistic programme have built a sort of cult out of unconscious, spontaneous desires, human impulses, instinctive drives and intuitive insights. The neo-conservatives have declared war on the dictates of reason, which allegedly impoverishes the perception of the world. They are calling for the shackles of analytical reason to be broken, as being incapable of reflecting the fullness of life. The humanistic inspiration is thus being taken from the spiritual treasuries of the past.

Lastly, there are the *neo-radicals* who advocate humanistic renaissance. Their programme of action is based on their own historical outlook. According to the proponents of this theory, social dynamics are the

result of unrelated impulses, stimulated drives and spontaneous, antagonistic, strivings. Renouncing the notion of the law-governed and objective evolution of the historical process, the radicals absolutize social cataclysms, cultural mutations and other "social landslides". The starting point of this utopia is the criticism of capitalism as a historically-established form of civilization. Exposing its deficiencies from abstract ethical and cultural positions, the radical thinkers call for "breaking away" from the developing historical process, for disrupting the objective bonds and relations existing in today's world in order to draw apart the curtains of history and step out onto a new cultural and historical scene.

The voluntaristic appeals for "disengaging" from history come along with "free" actions, leading to the setting up of new forms of social community, and to the idealization of communal and sectarian living. Hence various projects for an "alternative" society and a "counter-civilization". Their designation is singular—to launch man into some other world, in which all the vices of "industrialized society" will instantly disappear.

Meanwhile, the height of the radicals' desires is by no means social harmony, but something that may be referred to as "non-society". They contest the legitimacy of society as a totality of people, united through historically established and stable social bonds and relations. The radicals refuse to admit that such a community possesses durable features and is capable of making collective living inimitably singular.

The *Marxists'* ideal is absolutely different. They do not attempt to artificially construct an "ideal society of the future", or to break away from the onward march of history. Yet in their theory and practice they continue to seek answers to many questions.

Perhaps some readers of this brochure believe that socialism implies the certain unification of the people. Nothing could be further from the truth. On the contrary, socialism suggests searching; it bases itself on a multitude of human values.

Socialist society rests on a broad range of forms, tendencies and cultural traditions. The divergence of roads leading to Communism is a law of social evolution. There is no other way for Marxists to understand the problem of human society's advancement along the road of social and cultural progress or the problem of the humanization of the history of mankind.

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ГУМАНИЗМ: ТРАДИЦИИ И ПАРАДОКСЫ

На английском языке

Цена 45 к.

HUMANISM: TRADITIONS AND PARADOXES